The International Crosby Circle Presents

BING

Edited by REG BRISTO

SEPTEMBER, 1978 No 51

"One of the things that always seem to interest writers assigned to me is this question: 'You seem to have as many men fans as women fans and your voice and your manner seem to please both sexes. To what do you attribute it?'

I'll give the answer I've always given. It applies particularly to my singing. I think - and I'm confident that my assumption is correct - that every man who sees one of my movies, or who listens to my records, or who hears me on the radio, believes firmly that he sings as well as I do, especially when he's in the bathroom shower. Its no trick for him to believe this because I have none of the mannerisms of a trained singer and I have very little voice. If I've achieved any success as a warbler its because I've managed to keep the kind of naturalness in my voice, my phrasing and my mannerisms which any Joe Doakes possesses. They feel no kinship with a singer of wonderful range and elaborate register. They realise that he's achieved something they can never hope to achieve. But its my hunch that most men feel that if they had gotten the opportunities I've had, they could have done just as well. I don't doubt there's a lot of truth in that.....

Bing in CALL ME LUCKY

(his early 1950's autobiography)

Be that as it may, his younger brother Bob was almost certainly much more accurate when, after listening to views such as the above, succinctly remarked:

"Yeah, he just rolled uphill to success....."

DINNER AT LEEDS

As foreshadowed in the last issue of BING, the annual dinner and meeting of THE INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE will take place on Sunday, September 17, and will be at THE MANSION HOTEL, ROUNDHAY PARK, LEEDS. A start will be made at 3.00pm with dinner at 5.00pm and occupancy of the hotel until 10.30pm. Organiser Michael Crampton (19, Carrholm Crescent, Chapel Allerton, Leeds, LS7 2NL, West Yorks) reports that there is every indication of a record attendance this year and your Editor/Secretary is looking forward to meeting old friends as well as some of the "newa fellas" who have stated their intention to attend.

Ken Barnes, who played such a major part in the final phase of Bing's recording career, will - subject to being in the country! - also attend. There is a cautionary note here, however, for Ken is tied up with some very interesting Crosby projects with much pressure on his time. He will make every effort to grace the proceedings.

The opportunity is being taken this year to invite members to bring or buy items of Crosbyana - books, records, photos, books &c. This should prove, therefore, an excellent opportunity of adding such items to one's collection, so bring your "spares"!

There will be two major absentees this year due to the most melancholy of reasons. We will have no cheerful, taped, message from Bing; and we will not be enlivened by the wit, charm, and record presentation of Mick Drury.

Anyone desirous of attending and who hasn't already done so, should get in touch with Mike Crampton immediately so that he may finalise the catering arrangements at The Mansion Hotel. The price of tickets, which naturally includes dinner (in fact, that is the ONLY charge) is £4.35p.

Less than a month later, THE BING CROSBY PHOTO CLUB under the organisation of FRANK MURPHY, 32 Ferndale Avenue, Wallsend, TYNE & WEAR NE28 7NE, will be holding a "First Anniversary" tribute to Bing on Cotober 14th in the Prince of Wales Room at the County Hotel, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. This is timed from 6pm to 10.30pm with admission from 5.30pm. Tickets, available only from Frank Murphy, are 60p each. The County Hotel is opposite Newcastle Central station. Here again, a fine attendance is anticipated.

The Photo Club, as you would expect, specialises in big ranges of photographs of Bing, as well as note-paper printing facilities and so on. It also issues BING PICTORIAL on the 15th August, November, February and May. Subscription annually is £2.50p to receive the pictorial; tape and photo offers only are available to ICC members as associates. Write to Frank for details with SAE.

THE SOUTHERN BING CROSBY TRIBUTE CLUB is organised - as indicated, at the other end of the country! - by PHIL CLARKE, 69 Walden Rd.,Stamshaw, Portsmouth, promoting meetings with people living in the south of England at which are shewn films &c. of Bing. Phil is a video/film collector (and expert) of some note and invites ALL who are interested in acquiring Bing films to write to him. Phil has also made us somewhat envious by obtaining a Crosby badge - this is available to ANYONE at £3. plus 20p postage. It is marked, however, "SOUTHERN"....People interested should write to Phil.

THE INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE

(Hon. Secy/Editor REG BRISTO) presents BING, the official journal....

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September, 1978

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SUBSCRIPTION DUE: [X] [ ]

WITH THIS ISSUE IS INCLUDED, ON A SEPARATE SHEET, AMENDMENTS TO THE MINI-DISCOGRAPHY. The mini-discography costs £1.50 post paid BUT £2 to overseas members and it will be sent air-mail. The LPography is still (but only just) available ay £2.50 post paid. Overseas members £3.00 for which it will be posted air mail.

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In this issue is THE TOLL OF THE 'SEVENTIES wherein it is stated that this must inevitably be so. But when that story on Joe Venuti was penned we certainly didn't think that VIC GILMORE would be the subject of sad news. We were stunned to hear that Vic had passed away - collapsing and dying in 15 minutes - on Sunday 27 August. He had been an "ever-present" at Leeds, together with his two pals, Alf Farrow and Frank Briggs. Vic was only 65 - one of those quiet but nevertheless dedicated admirers, never failing to drop us a nice, friendly letter at regular intervals. Alf regretted his "letter full of woe"; it seems neither he nor Frank are enjoying the best of health as well - we pray things take a turn for the better on Humberside...

In just a couple of weeks now we shall be sombrely marking - not commemorating - an anniversary we thought, no doubt, foolishly, would never come to pass. But it did, as it had to - yet there is still difficulty in comprehending the calamity of last October 14.

As we all knew, we have gone on playing our records, acquiring new ones, listening to tapes, exchanging views and news; all part of that bounteous legacy that Bing left and to which we have all clung.

A curious calm, an odd quietness, seems to have descended.... the media seem distinctly reluctant to make the most of that legacy. As you will be aware, no TV channels have plans to make a commemorative showing of Bing's films, and while we have had glorious additions in the way of recordings, this strange hiatus (as we hope) persists. The ITV channels that hold the Pasadena TV show have no plans to re-screen it although it has been pointed out to them that because it clashed with another compelling Crosby feature on the "other" channel many, many people have yet to see it. Similarly there is no news of plans to make a film of the Crosby story as was done - in his lifetime, too - of Al Jolson. We wonder why? Was, and is, the subject too vast, too awe-inspiring to attempt? Surely not when the film moguls have filmed the world's - and history's - greatest stories. The mammoth Biblical stories, for example.

Not that we are suggesting the Crosby story should be in that category but merely illustrating that while Bing's life would make an epic story and film, there seems to be no rush to produce it.

And how we miss what had become those annual visits to Britain... that realisation above all else must make the news really sink in. How exciting it was to learn that Bing was here...there...golfing, shooting, being held-up endlessly for radio and newspaper interviews....that he was liable to turn up in almost any programme from 'Stars on Sunday" - to GRANDSTAND!

We are sadly aware that some of our pages this time are the reverse of elegant. This is tied up with a materials supplier who suddenly went out of business without a word of warning and the necessity to scurry around for an economic new one - and finding those whose materials did not live up to their confident assertions. No matter, it will be readable, though it is true that we did seriously consider halting proceedings and starting all over again! But the over-riding desire to get the issue out BEFORE the Leeds gathering determined us to carry on. Not quite, but almost, regardless! That gathering, as you will see, is now virtually upon us - September 17 forsooth. Hope to see so many of you this year.

REG BRISTO, Hon. Secy/Editor, 7 Greenmeadow Close, CWMBRAN, Gwent, NP4 3NR.

Original material (C) 1978

LESLIE GAYLOR WRITES

Time seems to fly past - and here again is the latest issue of BING, an event eagerly awaited by all our members all over the world. Many wrote to me after my lengthy write-up in the June issue and were de-delighted that Editor Reg had allocated so much space for my marathon.

But of course, a story once told is told...from now on I cannot relate any further experiences of those past wonderful two years with Bing... memories engraved for ever but now, as I said, the story has been told, and I can never match those times again. But, first of all I have some late news in the shape of a letter from Nancy Briggs in the Crosby office in Beverly Hills which contains news of Bing's family which I know is of interest to a lot of members:

> Dear Leslie - We too have been busy but I'm sorry I haven't written lately to thank you for all the clippings and news you've sent us. We truly have appreciated your continuing to send these things to us.
>
> All is well here. Kathryn Crosby has been touring all summer in the play SAME TIME NEXT YEAR. Harry is home from England for the summer. Mary Frances has been in Los Angeles working in the television and motion picture industry and Nathaniel has been playing in golf tournaments.
>
> All in all, they've kept very busy and this fall Mrs. Crosby will be at home in San Francisco where she will be working at the American Conservatory Theatre.
>
> August 15, 1978. Best from all of us...

I also had a fine letter from Leo Lynn in the same office:

Dear Leslie - Many thanks for the nice pictures. I especially like the one of you and Bing together. I know you thought a lot of Bing and, Leslie, he thought a lot of you and valued your friendship very much. You did a lot of nice things for Bing. You devoted a lot of your time to the many tasks necessary to make an appearance or put on a show and I know that Bing greatly appreciated your help. Ken Barnes will verify this.

Leslie, we all feel a void in our lives at his passing, especially you and I and those that worked with him as much as we did. Now with the discount air lines maybe you might put Los Angeles on one of your itineraries in the future. If you do, we all would be most happy to meet you and show you around.

Leslie, I'm sure we now have Bing putting in a good word for us...

Always your friend,
LEO LYNN.

It is not difficult to imagine the gloom and sense of loss that must almost overwhelm the Crosby offices; its gloomy enough for all his fans all over the world, but there are the heart of what was Bing's domain it must be almost unbearable. However, I was of course, pleased to receive these two appreciative letters.

Now I also have some record news if I'm not getting on Bert's territory... no less than a letter from Michael Brooks at COLUMBIA SPECIAL PRODUCTS - he of the contentious sleeve notes, no less!

The 'meat' of his letter was that Volume III of THE BING CROSBY COLLECTION is under way and will consist of the following:

1.	W.147751-11	My Angeline	8.	B.12707-A	Its within your power
2.	W.148423-4	Orange Blossom Time	9.	B.12856-A	I'm playing with fire
3.	E.37440-A	I'm sorry, dear.	10.	B.13151-A	Here is my heart
4.	E.37474-A	Can't We Talk it over?	11.	B.781-A	My love.
5.	JC.8593-A	Waltzing in a dream.	12.	B.792-A	I would if I could but I can't.
6.	JC.8597-A	Let's try again.			
7.	B.12531-A	Someday we'll meet again.	13.	LA.22-A	Home on the range.
			14.	LA.90-A	Let's spend an evening at home.

The "Artist Job Sheet" enclosed with the letter doesn't give a release date. Extracts from the Brooks letter will be of interest, viz:

> 'I am very pleased that you and other Crosby collectors are happy with my selections. I wanted to avoid the usual rag-bag of selections that other producers always seem to come up with and instead reissue items that had not seen the light of day for many years. OF COURSE, I RAN INTO THE USUAL CRITICISM SFROM WITHIN THE COMPANY ("no-one's ever heard of these titles - no-one will buy it".) I8m glad you proved them to be wrong....I still feel that the sound quality on the LPs is below standard, even taking into consideration the age of the recordings....
>
> 'I am surprised at your comments re my liner notes. THEY HAVE COME IN FOR SOME CRITICISM HERE, AS I EXPECTED, BUT THIS RECORD WAS NOT DESIGNED FOR THE MASS MARKET, BUT RATHER FOR THE CROSBY ENTHUSIAST.
>
> 'I can assure you that the sound quality on Volume III will be superior to that of vols 1 and 2, thanks to some new equipment we have purchased. I've also gone back to the original on HERE IS MY HEART, eliminating the annoying echo that appeared on the Harmony LP,'

Well, that may help some to understand the liner (sleeve) notes! But all will be delighted that Volume III is clearly on its way.

> And I must say that one of the features of BING which gives me a lot of pleasure is members' letters. I enjoy very much all the information and points of view expressed - and even 'old stalwarts' of the Crosby world can pick up a point or two.

A LETTER FROM WALLY MALSTON: I think perhaps you would like to note part of a letter I have received from WALLY MALSTON who writes scripts for Ted Rogers and with Ted worked with Bing to quite some extent on the many shows given both here and in the States. Wally's letter was delayed somewhat and is dated 16 June last :

'Life has to go on and we know that Bing passed away as he'd wished - after a great golf game. His songs and films will live on for all time...Bob Hope has reached 75 and he's still very active. It just goes to show that old age does not mean giving up everything. Watching Bing at work made me realise that and when you look around in the entertainment profession people like George Burns - now 81 - are still going strong. Bing was enjoying a great new-found popularity when he came over for those special 50th Anniversary concerts and the kick he got out of doing them was a treat to see. When he got to know Ted and I we'd find him coming up to us and saying "Are you going to do some jokes about..." querying some topical event of the day.

> He was always watching Ted Rogers work and would be laughing and applauding with the rest. What a great guy to have worked with... When we went to Ireland he was concerned for Ted in as much as our topical references would not mean so much over there, but I had gone on ahead and started researching the local scene so that when Ted

opened, his act was locally topical as it had been in London. Then when we went to Scotland Bing closely watched as I changed all the local stuff and found out all about the Edinburgh scene. So it was in the States; a little research and a little adapting and the material would work there, too. Ted Rogers, incidentally, slowed down a little in the States and that was probably our only presentation change. We know some of the critics expressed mixed feelings about Ted - but the real proof is in the tapes, and you have heard them!

Perhaps I should have explained above in quoting the letter from Leo Lynn; Leo was a college buddy of Bing's and eventually became his film "stand-in" for many years and latterly had been his public relations manager.

I had an extremely pleasant experience on July 29 last when I went to a seaside theatre at Shanklin here on the island along with Margaret Billington (one of our ICC members) and her husband Steve to meet Ted Rogers and Wally Malston backstage before their show. Naturally we discussed Bing and much to my surprise, Ted gave me a "plug" during the closing of his act and somehow they knew where I was sitting and had a spotlight put on me

BINGO VIEJO has been released on - I believe - a Mexican pressing and no doubt mention of this appears in Bert's KEEPING TRACK. My own particular reason for purchasing this re-issue is that the orchestral accompaniment has been "cut back" a little and Bing's voice correspondingly brought up. This makes the whole thing sound a lot better than the British pressing - and I was pleased with that. And it proves how right Bing was when he mentioned in a letter to me last year that this had been done, making is sound much more "formal"! In fact, I think it is worth getting this "re-make" if only for one track, LA BORRECHETA. The Spanish guitar really comes over beautifully, much more pronounced than on the London version.

It had been my intention to plead with ALL ICC members to send a letter to CBS in the States asking for a Volume III to include some of the still outstanding classics; happily that will not be necessary - tho' a letter of appreciation would almost certainly encourage this company to issue even more of Bing's vintage material. The address is: Columbia Records, CBS Inc., 51 West 52 Street, New York, USA - an airmail letter costs 12p, I think.

The April issue of THE STAMP MAGAZINE carried an advertisement about two envelopes being available with silkcachetted photos of Bing at a price of £2.50p. One envelope is stamped as in Spain on the day of Bing's death, and the other stamped in Los Angeles four days later on the day of Bing's funeral. The package is very colourful and can be obtained from ARLINGTON SUPPLIES LTD., PO Box 143, 273 Green Lanes, London, N13 4DR. Order BING CROSBY MEMORIAL COVERS.

Finally this time, may I again thank all the people who have written to me - some of them indeed sending me gifts - and who all contribute in keeping the Bing flag flying. I look forward especially to magazine efforts by some of the youngsters now in the Circle. My best wishes to all.

Editor: Les enclosed photo-stats of the specially stamped envelopes but I'm afraid they will not reproduce here; but I've seen them and they are another extremely pleasant souvenir. The news of Volume III has been dealt with here as there was no time to get the stuff to Bert Bishop in time for this issue - but no doubt Bert's comments will be available in

in due course - and Vol III will enable us to do what we "promised" in the last issue and yet failed to produce: the analysis of titles and takes prepared by KEN CROSSLAND contained in the two CBS Embassy albums and the two SUNBEAMS. Now we can delay it until Vol III is out and produce an analysis of all five albums seeing that many of the titles are duplicated.

Mr. Brooks's admission to Leslie that his sleeve notes were aimed at the Crosby collector does to an extent ameliorate the situation - but there are plenty of Crosby buffs NOT all that pleased with them at that! But more of these notes further on. And it is surely most intriguing that BINGO VIEJO has been reissued in what appears to be totally different form.

MARGARET BILLINGTON is indeed an enthusiastic Crosby admirer on the Isle of Wight and there are, in fact, others. But Mary, who is also a friend of Wally Malston's, gave us a fuller account of the theatre episode, when she wrote:

"Ted (Rogers) was on stage for the complete second-half of the show, nearly an hour without stopping! And at the end he said: 'You have been a great audience...I have appeared with some great men - Perry Como, of course and our great Bing! And tonight in the second row we have the boss of The Bing Crosby Club - Leslie Gaylor - you've all heard of Leslie, haven't you? Come on, give me a big hand - and the lights please!" Many people called out 'Yes!' and Leslie got an excellent reception. A little self-consciously, perhaps, Leslie waved to Ted Rogers. I thought that was lovely of Ted and we were all quite thrilled."

Very nice indeed - and a well-deserved hand for Leslie.

An interesting letter (many more further on!) from RAY STEELE, 7740 Barrymore Drive, Delta, B.C. Canada:

My wife and I have just returned from a trip to Spokane, Washington and while we were there we went to Gonzaga University where, of course, Bing went. I just wanted to go thro' the building and see if there was any mention of Bing. I was totally amazed to learn that Bing had donated a library to the University, called the Crosby Library, and wondered why there has been no mention of it anywhere. We had the honour and privilege of visiting the CROSBYANA ROOM there and saw Bing's "Oscar" displayed in a showcase along with all his Gold records - and probably all the awards that he ever received are displayed there. We could have spent the whole day there. We learned while there that there is talk of erecting a statue of Bing in Spokane and it is to be hoped this materialises. Reading the guest, or visitors' book, was interesting - and touching. Remarks like "We'll see you soon, Bing - where the blue of the night meets the gold of the day...." Not an easy trip but if one can get there, most rewarding.

Editor: Perhaps one of the ambitions of any Crosbyite; but Ray, the donation of the library HAS been well publicised and talk about, both at the time and since. And if I remember correctly, the opportunity was taken to make Bing a Doctor or Fellow of Music of Gonzaga University.

Many members have reported on seeing the show, BING AND BRASS, that has been playing in theatres up and down the country - actual title is The Sound of Brass and the music of BING..."a tribute to the life and music of Bing Crosby." Most thought it an excellent show. It featured the John Waddington Big Band, the Brian Broadhead Orchestra and company led by Jamie Michael Stewart. No-one attempted to imitate Bing but his songs were put over in fine style.

KEEPING TRACK with

BERT BISHOP

As we go into the quarter that marks the first anniversary of the death of Bing, a lamentable period to be sure, the news of record releases remains, as it has been, for the past twelve months, full of promise but hardly overwhelming in its realisation. Certainly we have no complaints concerning Decca, United Artists and RCA, from whom we have their entire catalogue released or reissued (discounting RCA'S 'HOW THE WEST WAS ON', and even that is available on a Japanese label AND on sale in this country at specialist importers at £15.50p). Even CBS have fulfilled their promise of two very fine albums of early Bing, and have kept their BING CROSBY IN HOLLYWOOD 1930-34 and BING CROSBY - THE EARLY JAZZ YEARS double albums in the catalogues by amalgamation and reissues. But, exactly where do CBS leave off - and MCA begin? That is the burning question.

Somewhere from around 1934 and onward it is MCA who hold the copyright to hundreds of Bing's recordings. To be specific it is probably from the 8th August 1934 with the title I LOVE YOU TRULY, which song was the first in the original American Decca Blue Label catalogue with the number 100. From there on one can thumb through pages of titles - in the revised Mini-Discography for instance - and note for oneself the quite considerable number of songs which are clearly due for a dusting off and airing by reissue; songs which have never been on LP, and others which have been released on that medium just the once only and are now many years deleted.

> Of course there are wild rumours and it is quite naughty of me to perpetuate the one that insists that the entire MCA Crosby collection is to be released in a number of 10-LP boxed sets! If that made you fall off your seat then perhaps we'd better return to the more sobering actuality of the first and, so far, only release in the vaguely promised multi-track series from MCA.

BING SINGS SONGS OF THE ISLANDS MCA MCFM 2939 Mono UK £3.89p

Song of the islands
Sweet Leilani -B
*To you sweetheart, aloha
Beyond the reef
*Trade winds
The singing sands of Alamosa
*Remember Hawaii
South Sea Island magic -A
The moon of Manakoora -B
Aloha oe (Farewell to thee)

Blue Hawaii -A
In a little hula heaven -B
The one rose that's left in my heart -A
Sweet Hawaiian chimes
When you dream about Hawaii -B
A song of old Hawaii
Moonlight and shadows
Hawaiian paradise -A
Aloha kuu ipo aloha (Goodbye, Sweetheart,
Sing me a song of the islands. (Goodbye).

Firstly, in answer to the many queries I've had about the footnote that reads SPECIAL THANKS TO CLIN PUGH FOR THE PHOTOGRAPHS - quite conspicuous by their absence - I can assure you that ICC member Colin Pugh of Bristol did, in fact, supply MCA with a considerable file of photo's of Bing, film stills and Hawaiian-orientated studies and the like. So what happens? Somebody in the graphics department snips Shirley Ross and Martha Raye out of the arms of Bing from the WAIKIKI WEDDING film still and has David Dragon knock out a very basic art illustration which is about as inspiring as the one that Dragon produced for the Capitol Vine Series, GREAT COUNTRY HITS! The sleeve design is a travesty of the style and

flair of the man it presents and is a disgraceful start to what we hope will be a satisfying series of albums.

Chris Ellis writes the sleeve notes; a man of considerable talent, noted for his liking for Bing and for taking the "Bing" vocals on the New Paul Whiteman Orchestra arrangements. His nod to Bing is minimal, but notes on the songs are interesting. With regard to the tracks we do at least get ten for the very expensive purchase that this LP really is. Although there is, inevitably, an overlap with the Coral pressing, I'LL SING YOU A SONG OF THE ISLANDS, we do have three tracks, marked here with an asterisk, that have not been on LP before (TO YOU SWEETHEART, ALOHA and TRADE WINDS did appear on the US Decca album BLUE HAWAII but not here at home) and two, MOONLIGHT AND SHADOWS and THE SINGING SANDS OF ALAMOSA which, until now, have been issued only on 78rpm and once each on 10" and 12" long-deleted Brunswick LPs. So, there are compensations.

I've made an attempt to ascertain the takes that have been used, and from a listening comparison they are as noted in the above list of contents.

BING SINGS (96 of his great hits) U.S. electronic stereo.	Reader's Digest 8-LP boxed set.	$26.97 plus postage $29.97 for cartridges or cassettes.

After considerable speculation the US branch of Reader's Digest have at last brought out a boxed set of 96 Bing vocals on eight LP records. It will at once be realised from a glance at the titles that the collection features mainly Bing's popular favourites from the 'Forties and 'Fifties phase of his unique career. The accent is heavy on 'the best of Bing' angle, but there are a half dosen or so tracks that are new, or fairly rare, to LP to add some incentive for the enthusiast. This apart from the fact that the set is handsomely produced in a luxury case and includes copious album notes about Bing, his music and career.

By comparison with the World Record set of seven LPs (still available and advertised here at home) the Reader's Digest collection can be said to be inferior in actual content so far as collectors are concerned. There's nothing inferior in Bing's songs, of course, but the fascination of the WR set, with its 113 tracks of considerable variety and time span, is not matched by this new collection, very well presented though it may be.

In comparing the two collections it can be satisfyingly noted that of the joint total of 209 tracks 182 are different...the 'overlap' of the two collections being only 27 songs. So between them, WR and Reader's Digest have accounted for a very large slice of Crosbyana that has been produced and presented for the public at large.

I'm sure that the Digest collection will be released in the UK and other countries and it will be no bad thing if interested members here write to the countries' appropriate sales offices to try and ensure that this comes about.

As usual with these collections this latest one is available on 'easy terms', and here it is in 3-monthly instalments. Write to Readers Digest, Pleasantville, N.Y. 10570, USA (send no money) for the records and/or details. It is common knowledge these days that as we write there are almost 2 dollars to the £.

The 96 titles of this US set are listed in the pages beyond 21, together with some of the literature that is being used in America to promote the project, as it is felt this will be of considerable interest as a forerunner, perhaps, to its issue here.

One delight of this (so far) US collection is the considerable sprinkling of Bing's talented musical friends for accompaniment - Fred Astaire, The Andrews Sisters, Connee Boswell, Judy Garland, Johnny Mercer, Bob Hope, Evelyn Knight, Patti Andrews, Jane Wyman, Gary Crosby, Dick Haymes, Mary Martin, Jack Teagarden and the fine singing groups like the Ken Darby Singers and the Mel-Tones.

BINGO VIEJO	Anahuac ANC 3901	US

* Eres Tu
Maria Bonita
* The breeze and I.
Frenesi
Amapola
Green Eyes
Cuando caliente el sol
Besame mucho
* Spanish eyes
* La Borrachita

From the United States comes an interesting variation - the one Les Gaylor has already mentioned - on the London (UK) label featuring this 1975 collection of Spanish-orientated songs. For the new readers first let us establish that the title, broadly translated, means Old Pal Bing and that the Spanish pronunciation of the title is BINGO VEE-A-HO.

Apart from the rearrangement of the titles this new release gives us some alternate takes by way of variation. Two of these have been released before; ERES TU on a Decca-London 'single' and SPANISH EYES on the Decca tribute 2-LP set BING. Some research is still to be done on the other takes as the variations on THE BREEZE AND I and LA BORRACHITA could be either editing or different orchestral takes only. In which case an amendment to the Mini-Discography would not be necessary. Members' comments are invited on these variations, marked here with an asterisk... or any others they may note.

> This might be an opportune moment to put in a plea for the dedicated label collectors and those, like myself, who are on the fringe of that desirable thought frustrating form of collecting. Though I frequently use the expression 'this LP for label collectors only', or words to that effect, the object of the phrase is to help members differentiate between the generally sought after albums and those which will have only limited appeal. Every collector, as in all things, has a right to decide what and how he will collect his Bing. There must be no suffrance or intolerance of collectors who purchase Bing from the 'Thirties period only, or those who seek to buy every reissue label; indeed, from the latter group there often comes, as may be the case in this new BINGO VIEJO, a revelation of an alternate take to make that third group, the complete collector, look to their laurels.

GREAT MOVIE MUSIC	GRT 9D06-01 4-LP Boxed Set US (Issued by Saturday Evening Post Listening Library) Includes 50-page booklet.

Secret love: Lullaby of Broadway (duet with Dick Powell) Love is just around the corner: Pennies from Heaven: Where the blue of the night.

Four LPs and a lavishly presented booklet of films and film stars, but only five air-shot tracks by Bing.

A TRIBUTE TO BING CROSBY	Vol. 1	EMI	EMB 10389	2-LP set Australia
"	Vol. 2	EMI	EMB 10390	2-LP set Australia

These two separately marketed albums are a direct equivalent of the HRB and Murray Hill 4-LP boxed sets entitled BING CROSBY AND FRIENDS. The sleeves employ much the same graphics as the boxed sets.

FEELS GOOD, FEELS RIGHT	Decca SKLA 5261	Stereo	Australia

Direct equivalent of the UK release.

A LEGENDARY PERFORMER	RCA	CPL1 2086	Australia

Direct equivalent of UK release, including booklet.

TRUE LOVE/WELL, DID YOU EVAH?	Capitol	006-81258	German single

"Golden Oldies Vol. 19" Packaged in a stout sleeve with a photo of Bing and Grace Kelly.

CONVERSATIONS IN HOLLYWOOD	Citadel	CT 6029	US

Though listed in the last issue of BING no details were to hand. As the entire Side 1 is taken up with an interview of Bing by Tony Thomas it was felt that the information was well worth passing on. Side 2 features Jack Benny with the same interviewer. A couple of photo's of Bing grace the sleeve.

THOROUGHLY MODERN BING	Pickwick	SPC 3583	Stereo	US

A reissue of the original - and STILL no WHERE THE RAINBOW ENDS! The UK reissue of this album is called SINGALONG WITH BING, and was reviewed in the March BING. The US issue has the sides reversed.

SEASONS	Polydor	2383478	Stereo	Australia

Direct equivalent of the UK issue

A BING CROSBY COLLECTION Vol II (14 sides Never released on LPs)	CBS Embassy	31656	Mono	UK £2.99

I'll follow you -A
Try a little tenderness -A
You're getting to be a habit with me -A
* Young and Healthy -A
You're beautiful tonight, my dear -A
What do I care, its home! -A
You've got me crying again -A
I've got to pass your house -A
Shadow waltz -A
I've got to sing a torch song -A
Littld Dutch mill
Shadows of love -A
* Ridin' around in the rain -B
Give me a heart to sing to -C

(Tracks marked with an asterisk are rare or unreleased)

I know that the titles were listed previously in these columns, but the importance and great delight that this album affords so many of us warrants another look now that the LP is actually available in this country.

As with Vol I it lacks the liner sleeve notes that have caused so much friction among collectors - I never thought I'd ever see the famous four-letter word on a Bing LP sleeve - and which was taken up both eloquently and pertinently by Herb Bootman of San Diego, USA.

But producer Michael Brooks doesn't let up on his abrasive sleeve notes on this Vol II and though I for one have no real objection to this novel departure from the arena of hackneyed sycophancy it COULD be true to say that the casual record buyer might be put off by his put-down remarks about the songs and arrangements.

His comments on some of the lyrics are not without relevance, but whenever I've had the chance to listen to Bing singing, say, WHAT DO I CARE, ITS HOME! the actual lyric has passed me by in the splendour of the glorious sound of the 'Crosby cry'of the early 'Thirties. There's only a couple of tracks on here that I would substitute - TRY A LITTLE TENDERNESS and YOUNG AND HEALTHY, mainly because of the accompaniment and arrangement Bing is held to - and my substitutions would be drawn from Vol I anyway!

If CBS and Michael Brooks thought they were only putting out collectors' items in order 'to fill the gaps' they couldn't have been more wrong for the average admirer of Bing. We don't all have the opinion that these years saw Bing at his best, but we surely agree that that era of Bing's voice had an uniqueness about it that was quite unmatched by any other artist. Before,Bing could be identified with other singers, and subsequently, other singers identified with him, but that period remains pure Bing.

The two LPs are likely to remain unmatched in content and presentation - except, of course, for the Volume III we have just learned is on its way - ever again, so far as new-to-LP 'Thirties Bing is concerned...and to think that one member wrote to me and said: "After all the hullabaloo, is this it, then?" Ah well....you cannot please everyone.

> Editor: Breathes there a soul so dead as to utter such blasphemy... or whatever it is! Be that as it may, we do have a comment from LES WILSON, 568 East Angela Str., Pleasanton, Calif. 94566, USA on the READER'S DIGEST set Bert was writing about. Les says:
>
> 'I've received the 8-LP set put out by Reader's Digest and the sound and fidelity - simulated s' 'eo - is excellent. It also has most interesting notes on the back of each record jacket about each track and its association with Bing. I think its an album well worth getting and would make a great start for any new Bing fan starting to collect Crosby on record."

We were"all shook up" - and that's positively the only OBLIQUE reference we're going to make concerning many letters received drawing comparisons between the life-style, talents and deaths of two entirely worlds-apart individuals because there was no real or valid connection. You either understand that or you do not - and it doesn't really matter! But we were saying, in other words, that we were astonished to receive a somewhat pugnacious demand in a lette from way down south in Marseille, France, written by our good ami Pierre Bugnet (full address: 19 Rue du Docteur 13004, Marseille, France):

"How is it you don't tell us anything about the recent delivery on the market of Bing and D. Bowie's LITTLE DRUMMER BOY - a single from Bing's last Christmas show? I'm still waiting for my copy which is NOT sold in shops but available from JUKE BOX, Centre Commercial Gaicte, 80 Avenue du Maine 75014, Paris, price 25 francs (about £3 plus £1 extra for P & P. IF THIS WAS MEANT FOR THE FRENCH MARKET ONLY I'D BE VERY GLAD TO ORDER ANY RECORDS YOU WISH FOR BRITISH FRIENDS...."

The answer to Pierre's query is contained in his final sentence: this MUST be a 'bootleg' issue for the French market for we have absolutely no knowledge of such a single here. Anyone feeling disposed for what, at least, will prove an unusual single - not to mention expensive! - should write direct, either to Pierre or the JUKE BOX address.

COMING ACROSS THEM IN A SIDE STREET NEWSAGENT, LES STREET, 8 Wyfan Place, MYNACHDY, CARDIFF, S. GLAM acquired several copies of the Dell Publications A BING CROSBY ALBUM and BING CROSBY: A PICTORIAL TRIBUTE and offers them at the price he paid for them - 75p. Les didn't say so but I should add at least 10p for postage &c.

THE JUBILEE APPEAL

It will be recalled that last October it was decided that in lieu of flowers for Bing's funeral a donation would be made to HM The Queen's Silver Jubilee Appeal Fund. There was little or no time to make transatlantic arrangements for floral tributes, many of us were in Leeds for the whole of that devastatingly sad week-end and in any case, Mrs. Crosby had intimated "no flowers" but that any gestures should be made in the form of this kind of donation.

JOHN BIGNELL, of 21 St. Andrews Avenue, Wembley, Midd'x kindly consented to act as our steward for this project, with the assistance of Pat Forster, 11 Norfolk Close, St. Margarets, East Twickenham, Midd'x. Just too late for inclusion in the June issue of BING John forwarded the official acknowledgement from HRH The Prince of Wales of the sum of £141.38p from THE INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE.

We must admit this sum was not in the region we had imagined it would be; nevertheless, its a fair contribution to the charity appeal in Bing's memory. And it is also a fact that despite the difficulties, some members did in fact arrange for floral tributes at the funeral.

To the names already published of donors to the appeal we must add the following:

Mr. V. Byne, Slough.
Mr. Derek Collinge, Nelson.
David Ward, Lincoln.
Margaret Illson, Market Harborough
Edw. Sturrup, Sunbury-on-Thames
Margaret Klisby, Chelmsford.
Arthur Waring, Manchester (and friends)
Ernest Smith, Dumfries.
Tony Heasman, Northolt.
Frank Hatwell, Birmingham
Max Reid, Frankstown, Australia.

Our thanks to all members who contributed - and special thanks to John Bignell and Pat Forster for accepting the onerous task of handling the cash.

We have told in past issue of how ENA HOOLEY, of Winchester, had the fine idea of purchasing a small plot in a charitable garden trust in Bing's name - and Kathryn's warm-hearted response on hearing of this. The trust concerned is MIDDLEHAM GARDENS TRUST, Lynmouth, Devon. Ena, as is usual in her case, immediately became a firm friend of The Mayor of Lynmouth and Lynton. So much so, in fact, that he has made a complete precedent by providing a Visitor's Book, with Bing's name on it, to be signed by visitors to the Garden. More than that, and realising that everyone cannot dash off to Devon to sign it (tho' we hope many will in the years to come) he has kindly forwarded the book to us in the hope and belief that a substantial body of our members will be the first to put their names in it.

It is proposed to take this book to LEEDS for the dinner &c. on September 17 next so that all present may inaugurate the book of memory. The letters from Kathryn have been inserted into the book - the actual letters, so The Mayor hopes we will be careful with it.

We will!

CROONER ? BAH HUMBUG!

If there is one thing that has never failed to irk me over the years - many of them, too! - it has been to see and hear Bing referred to as a "crooner". Not malevolently, or disparagingly, for sure, though in truth, the word WAS intended in derogatory fashion. And come to think of it, it is not used much these days anyway. Its origin, of course, goes back to the days when thin-voiced, nasal, vocalists used to sing anaemic "vocal refrains" on scratchy 78's!

It has always seemed to me - and you, I'm sure - grossly inaccurate that such a powerful, resonant timbre such as Bing possessed could ever be so described. There WERE times when Bing crooned - in such as a lullaby (TOO-RAH-LOO-RA-LOO-RAL is a fine example, indeed, a classic) but that was merely symptomatic of his always very individual way of interpreting a piece. A lullaby should be crooned - so Bing crooned it. But his voice was beyond all doubt a rich baritone of unequalled splendour, which allied to his incredible, inherent, style of phrasing, produced the most remarkable vocal combination the world has ever known.

Yet, on the day he died he was described in some papers and some quarters as - a crooner. Le Bing, El Bingo, Der Bingle, even the Old Groaner we accept as international recognition of his unique talent. But crooner - humbug!

And, you know, I don't think this appellation ever pleased Bing - not that he was sufficiently pretentious to object to the label. But recall what he wrote in CALL ME LUCKY on the subject:

> "....back in my Coconut Grove days writers described my voice as 'having a cry in it'. I suppose what they meant was 'having a sob in it'. I don't remember using the phrase myself.
>
> It was Hope who thought up the vulgarisation 'groaner' for the word 'crooner'. I've been asked, more times than I can shake an answer at, when the word crooner was invented. As far as I know Rudy Vallee was the first to be called that, although a case could be made out for the prior claim of the vaudeville-and-night-club headliner, Benny Fields. As for defining the word, it originally meant someone who sang with a band and crooned into a small megaphone or made mooing noises into a microphone. In France they call a crooner a chanteur de charme. I suppose this means a singer of charm, although it seems a loose term to describe me.
>
> Crooner connotes a slurring of words until they're mashed together in a hot mush in the mouth. When I'm asked to describe what I do, I say 'I'm not a singer - I'm a phraser'. That means that I don't think of a song in terms of notes; I try to think of what it purports to say lyrically. That way it sounds more natural, and anything natural is more listenable...."

I may be wrong, but reading those lines (as I have, scores of times) I get the impression, as I indicated above, that Bing resented, if only faintly, being described as a "crooner". And well he might have. Take virtually ANY record of Bing's - and marvel again at the powerful, vibrant masculinity, the impeccable phrasing, the always-sympathetic interpretation. Songs such as HOME ON THE RANGE, TEMPTATION, BLUE PRELUDE, MY REVERIE, FOR LOVE ALONE - but why go on?

How I remember those early days...one of the first things that made such an impact on me - and its effect is still with me going on 50 years later - was its sheer powerful yet melodious timbre. They were so utterly different from all other popular singers we had been hearing - especially the aforementioned "thin-voiced" vocal refrainers. In fact, it is true to say his impact divided vocalising into two distinct eras: BEFORE BING CROSBY...and AFTER....

There is another clue to Bing's thinking in the quotations above: when Bing said he tried to think of what a song was SAYING, that he was a phraser. Being the complete originator there were two classes Bing could look to: the concert-type singers (and he has often remarked on his admiration for John McCormack who was no 'crooner' - and the fairly anonymous band-singers just developing. There is no doubt which class he preferred. Yet even so, Bing was not happy with the concert-style singers in that, in squaring their shoulders and opening their chests, and keeping their chins tucked in in the approved classical style, it was often difficult, if not impossible, to actually hear the words of what they were singing. That remains true, too. One can often marvel at the quality, the pitch, the timbre, of a voice and yet have only the vaguest notion of what the performer is actually saying (unless one reads the lyric or libretto!)

I remain convinced that Bing would have been a world-class singer whatever style he had adopted. Miraculously, almost by instinct he hit on the quality of the concert-style baritone and allied it to the personal, intimate style that was growing up via the dance bands. Its axiomatic the class that Bing injected into some of the Whiteman records in the late 'Twenties - the sort of performances that made people sit up and say: This is different; this is good! And it was. And is....

Yet Bing also said in the same book: "Jack Kapp had a lot of trouble talking me into recording ADESTE FIDELIS. Being only a crooner, I felt that I didn't have sufficient stature as a singer to sing a song with religious implications. But Jack insisted that ADESTE FIDELIS through the years had virtually become a Christmas carol. So I recorded it. I'm glad I did...." And so are we. In fact, as we've often remarked, Jack Kapp was a very far-seeing man indeed. Listen to Bing again -

> "Jack's progressive plans for me were due to the fact that he had a much higher opinion of me than I had of myself. He was always striving to make me the top figure in recording. He selected things for me a cut above the ordinary popular songs, although of course, I sang those too. In fact, Jack saw to it that I achieved a musical variety very few other recording artists - with my limitations - were able to. I sang hillbillies and blues, ballads and Victor Herbert, traditional songs and patriotic songs, light opera and even an opera aria or two."

Assuredly, and if fate had decided otherwise, Bing would have been a world-class opera singer. Happily, that did not happen for though his career would still have been illustrious, his catchment of fans in that medium would have been rather smaller. I am reminded that there was a time when we had a couple of members of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, on our roll of members....

The truth is, I suppose, that Bing emerged singing the songs that crooners were singing; he sang with bands, as crooners did. So, he was erroneously lumped in with them - for a brief spell, of course.

Striking confirmation of what we've been saying came from our great friend Ken Barnes when he told us how astonished he was at the power of Bing's singing - at 70 years plus! Ken found it necessary to change the micro-

phone he originally intended using because of this vocal strength from the maestro. And it was most noticeable that at the Palladium Bing never had recourse to holding the microphone so that it obliterated his face. In fact, I notived particularly that Bing often held the hand mike around 18 inches away. How different from today's stars who come close to swallowing the dam' thing at times. And its not as if it is necessary - newsreaders and all other kinds of performers manage without this visage-hugging accoutrement. My belief is that most singers just would not know what to do with their hands if they were bereft of their main prop - the microphone. However, as usual, I'm digressing...

We can entirely discount any belief that Bing made his songs a warm slush or slurring in the mouth; and he didn't moo-moo into a microphone at any time. Chanteur de charme? Indubitably - of ineffable charm. But always, always, singing - not crooning!

MORTON H. MILLER, 21910 Marter Rd., St. Clair Shores, Mich. 48080, USA tells me he was rather disappointed at getting no response to his letter in the last issue (p. 35) and is still anxious for a British correspondent with a view to exchanging letters and records. And most of all, he desperately wants to get hold of a copy of BING No. 48 - the one following Bing's demise. We only wish we could help Morton and all the others who missed this issue. As many of our members have found out - a US contact is a very, very useful asset and the means of mutual benefit in the way of Crosbyana.

There were quite a number of "last" interviews with Bing last October; one that was widely-read was by a journalist, PETER GREEN. In a letter to Tom Evans (the Midlands' organiser) shortly after the event, Mr. Green gave the background to his particular interview with Bing:

'Since last Friday's dreadful, unbelievable news about our beloved hero I have thought about our chance meeting at the Palladium. And I thought you would like to know how I was involved in Bing's last week in London.

In fact I looked for you after the show closed on Saturday, 8 October, because unexpectedly I had the opportunity to go backstage again, this time with Leslie Gaylor. We met Mrs. Crosby and Harry and said hello to Bing as he left.

I thought that would be the last time I would see him on this trip. But then, Leslie suddenly suggested that I, being a journalist, should write a special story about my experiences with Bing for the fan club mags here and in the States. I agreed, and then decided to try for an interview with Bing. I wrote to Alan Fisher requesting him to ask Bing if he would meet me as I wanted to write for the clubs. He said my letter was placed on top of Bing's pile of mail on the Tuesday morning. Much later that day I phoned Bing's flat to ask Alan what was the score and before I knew what was happening, Bing was on the phone talking, asking me what it was all about. I told him I wanted an interview for the fans, and he warmed to the idea. But he wasn't sure whether there would be time. However, he said to call him about the same time next day, Wednesday 12 October.

Rather than call by telephone I decidéd to go straight to the flat next to Claridge's Hotel. To my dismay on the way I saw the newspaper billboards screaming about the £30,000 gems raid on Bing's flat while he was at the Palladium on the Saturday night we were all there. When I reached the flat my dismay increased when I saw it was

besieged by national paper reporters and photographers. I thought there would be no chance of getting my interview.

I hung around with the mob, feeling more and more dispirited. Then Bing, who had been playing golf, got out of a car and sauntered into the flat. The reporters milled around him asking questions about the robbery, but he just wasn't interested. I pushed up to him and introduced myself saying he had invited me to contact him. He moved into the lift, then glanced back at me to say, "Are you going to hang around the lobby?" My spirits rose appreciably. I said I would. The rest of the reporters finally went away having got nowhere with him. A few minutes later Alan came down and took me up, showed me into the flat and said: "Please join Mr. Crosby - he's all yours!"

> It was wonderful. I had him all to myself for over half-an-hour recording his comments for my article. He asked Alan to bring "Mr. Green a cup of tea" and we sat at the table drinking and talking. He signed a couple of photographs for me and we shook hands and said goodbye. When I got downstairs I realised he had inadvertently kept my pen with which he had signed my photos. I rang back up and told Alan and he said to come back again, which of course, I did. So I had another few words with Bing who asked if I had got my pen all right? So it was quite an exciting episode. But never in my wildest dreams did I realise that it would be his last interview, and that I had got it! Less than 48 hours later he was, unbelievably, dead in Madrid. I had seen him even later than Kathryn who went home earlier that day! Can you imagine?

I can tell you I wandered away from his flat almost in a dream. It all seemed so unreal. But when the terrible news came on the Friday I found it all the more bearable because it made me realise how lucky I had been in seeing him like that. In fact, it must have been the luckiest day of my life. What a warm personal memory I have of the great man for the rest of my days! Nobody can take it away from me. Only one member of his family - Harry - had seen him later than me. Kathryn had already left and the other two children of course had not come over for this trip. So to say that I felt honoured is to put it mildly.

> To think that only 48 hours before he passed on I had tea with Bing and was enveloped in his warmth! I still have to pinch myself to believe it.

And the interview has become an even more important one. He practically died, you might say, talking about the British fans he loved. And I was the one to record his words. So I am sure the article, which I have already sent to Leslie, will be an absolute must for all his fans. I regard it as the greatest story of my life. I could never get more pleasure or reward from anything else that I might do in the future. This has to be my crowning glory. I sign this with the pen which Bing held to write his messages for me....

PETER GREEN

Editor: The article was, of course, published widely and though belated, we feelthis background story will be of interest, especially as it helps to fill in for us the last days of Bing's life....we have learned that during that week he had conversations with an American friend about buyeing a golf course - and house - in Kent. He played golf; talked to Peter Green - and, of course, on the Monday had travelled down for that final performance at Brighton...That robbery was a sickening blow to all of us; yet typically, in an interview, Bing said with the utmost cordiality that it in no way affected his high regard for the British people.

A CROSBY QUIZ

We were astonished at the popularity of the quiz in the last issue - though we weren't too proud of the errors therein! The truth is, it was fairly impromptu and much more care should obviously have been taken with the answers! We were informed in double-quick time that the Crosby twins are Philip and Denis and not Philip and Lindsay. Also that Barry Fitzgerald appeared in WELCOME STRANGER with Bing as well as GOING MY WAY and TOP O' THE MORNING. Furthermore, the last session with the Andrews Sisters yielded SOUTH RAMPART STREET PARADE and COOL WATER, not THE LIVE OAK TREE. But this was on 5 September 1952, not 1954 as some well-meaning correctors told us - which all goes to show one has to be very careful indeed with the lynx-eyed Crosby intelligentsia!

Undeterred, we present another quiz. We should perhaps work out a grading system -possibly on the lines of the date you first got interested in Crosbyana - to enable you to judge how knowledgeable you are! One can hardly expect a 50's or a 70's convert to be au fait with, say, the late 20's and early 30's. Nevertheless, you can work that out individually perhaps. Sufficient to say that anyone who can answer all straight off correctly is entitled to call himself/herself a No. 1 Crosbyite: Here goes then:

1. It wasn't unusual for Bing to end a song with an ad lib, a remark, of some kind. At the end of which four songs did Bing made the following observations?

   (a) "Ah'm tired...."
   (b) "Could be!"
   (c) "..and you can keep the change!"
   (d) "..I've run out of string!"

2. Dick Nettleton's article, IF I KNEW THEN in this issue mentions there are two separate songs entitled LOVABLE. Can you name any other title(s) (that Bing sang, of course)which covered two distinct songs?

3. On the album SONGS I WISH I'D SUNG Bing sings a song in tribute, as it were, to Nat King Cole. What was it?

4. The album WHEN IRISH EYES ARE SMILING is dedicated, it would seem, to Irish songs. Yet it contains what might be described as a "howler". What is it?

5. Identify the songs from which the following lines come:
   (a) "Never treat others with scorn - we're only here 'cos we're born.."
   (b) "Every time we meet - my heart skips a beat..."
   (c) "You're close to me and I can see our future looks bright..."
   (d) "So lie down dogies and let me dream of the one I love..."

6. Sir Cedric Hardwicke appeared with Bing in a film, and also on a commercial recording; what other person of title appeared with Bing on the radio tho' not on record? Tricky!

7. Who was the trumpet/cornet player featured with Bing on IT HAD TO BE YOU?

8. In which films did Bing sing the following:
   (a) "Aren't you glad you're you?"
   (b) ""Zing a little zong".
   (c) "Small Fry".

9. How many commercially recorded duets did Bing do with Gary, his eldest son?

10. With whom did Bing duet with in GYPSY LOVE SONG?

11. A LOVE SONG OF OLD MEXICO was the description in brackets after the title of one of Bing's records: which?

12. ANDALUCIA is another 'sub-title' - of which song?

13. On which album did Bing sing A LITTLE BITTY TEAR?

14. Bing's musical autobiography (the 5-album set) opens with Buddy Cole playing the opening bars of BLUE OF THE NIGHT - but what is the first song Bing sings on this set?

15. And - the last?

Fifteen of the best, and if you can answer them all straight off without (and this is not permitted!) peeking at sleeves, books &c. Hughie Green would undoubtedly say "By Golly, you know your Bing!" But don't let that dismay you - and if you don't know them all the day will come when you DO - if you keep reading BING! The answers are elsewhere later on, printed upside down as before to forestall the back-to-front readers.

ANSWERS ON PAGE 46.

THE FRUSTRATIONS OF RECORD BUYING ------ Sough Wales isn't a particularly bright, or prolific place, for records. We're usually the last to get the issues to come out....a couple of shops in Cardiff are our only real hope.. And atop of that we have the vagaries of staff who seem to be largely unacquainted with records. For instance, one shop did happen to be surprisingly well-stocked with Bing records - around 20 in fact. But what a job to run them all down! To begin with, there was a "browser" boldly marked BING CROSBY! Excellent....and this contained SEASONS, BEAUTIFUL MEMORIES, THE BEST OF (EMI/MCA) and one or two others. But where was SING ALONG WITH BING? Ah there it is, in the revolving Pickwick budget stand....now Joe wanted me to pick up the Biograph - the assistant was sure they had it but a rustle thro' the browsers produced nothing. Then purely by accident I saw someone looking through the FILM SOUNDTRACKS browser - and there was WHERE THE BLUE OF THE NIGHT, alongside, incidentally, the HIGH SOCIETY album. Yet another revolving stand showed the MFP Where the Blue of the Night. "Why don't you put all the Crosby albums in ONE place?" I asked what appeared to be the manager. "Don't we?" he said - as soft as they make them. But then, what can we expected from a shop that puts Herb Alpert and the Tijuana Brass under BRASS BANDS alongside the GRIMETHORPE COLLIERY BAND? And Shirley Bassey under MALE VOCALISTS, not to mention Victor Silvester and his Orchestra under LIGHT CLASSICS!

It could be said, I suppose, that it makes record-hunting more exciting.... or tiresome. I wanted a record by REYNALDO MEZA Y LOS PARAGUAYOS too; I tried under "P", nothing doing. Let's try "M" for Meza..nothing doing. Surely its not under "R" for Reynaldo? No, it wasn't...it was under "L", which means "the" or, sometimes, "those"!

Do YOY have an infuriating shop? If so, tell us about it!

DON'T FORGET YOUR MINI-DISCOG IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY HAD IT...AND HURRY FOR GOODNESS SAKE FOR THE LP-OGRAPHY... see TRADING POST.

Bing Sings

Reader's Digest remembers

THE MAN AND HIS MUSIC.

With friends*

The Entertainer of the Century...

... recorded over 3,000 record sides, sold 400 million records, made the biggest-selling record ever, introduced more popular songs than any other entertainer, won worldwide endearment as Der Bingle, El Bingo, Le Bing.

Ask the man on the street: "Who is the most popular singer of all time?" Invariably the answer comes back: "Bing Crosby."

Bing Crosby was the entertainer of the century, a singer's singer, idol to more singers than anyone else. He was the first singer to make the microphone a singer's tool . . . the first singer to sing to us (not *at* us) in a casual, informal, intimate way . . . the first singer to let us hear all the words . . . *the* singer in popular music's golden age.

He was the first *multimedia* superstar—stage, screen, radio, TV, records. Especially records. "I like making records even more than making movies," Bing once said. "The good thing about it is that when you're finished recording, you've got something that's really your own."

Now his recordings can be yours—in BING SINGS, a Reader's Digest exclusive and the biggest, most complete, best-sounding Bing Crosby album ever offered anywhere.

Biggest album: eight dozen hits in all, from Bing's first Oscar winner (*Sweet Leilani*) to his million-sellers to the most popular record of all time (*White Christmas*).

Most complete album: two decades of Bing at his mellow best, from his memory-stirring theme (*Where the Blue of the Night Meets the Gold of the Day*) to the songs he introduced in movies to those wonderful duets that add even more fun and variety to this Collector's Edition album.

Best-sounding album: recordings transformed electronically from the originals into 2-channel sound with stereophonic characteristics. (Bing never sounded better than in BING SINGS.)

Remember 35¢ records?

In the '30s, with this man as its star attraction, Decca introduced a new low price for its records. You could buy a Crosby record, both sides, for 35¢. (In the '40s, they went to 75¢.) Our price is about 32¢ a hit. And there are no "flip" sides in BING SINGS (except for the record that had a million-selling hit on each side, *Sam's Song* and *Play a Simple Melody*).

"It's easy to say, it has often been said, and it's true, that there isn't a popular singer today who does not owe something to Bing Crosby. Not a popular singer over 30, anyway."
The New York Times

"His voice has been heard more often by more people than that of any human being who has ever lived." Louis Untermeyer, author and poet

Here is Bing at the top...

Ac-cent-tchu-ate the Positive *(with the Andrews Sisters, from "Here Come the WAVES")*
A Couple of Song and Dance Men *(with Fred Astaire, from "Blue Skies")*
All My Love
Amor
An Apple for the Teacher *(with Connee Boswell, from "The Star Maker")*
A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square
Autumn Leaves
Be Careful, It's My Heart *(from "Holiday Inn")*
Blue Hawaii *(from "Waikiki Wedding")*
Bob White *(with Connee Boswell)*
Careless Hands
Clementine
Close as Pages in a Book
Day by Day *(with Mel Torme)*
• Dear Hearts and Gentle People
Deep Purple
Don't Be That Way
• Don't Fence Me In *(with the Andrews Sisters)*
Easter Parade *(from "Holiday Inn")*
Empty Saddles *(from "Rhythm on the Range")*
Everywhere You Go *(with Evelyn Knight)*
Far Away Places
• Galway Bay
• I Can't Begin to Tell You
I Can't Escape from You *(from "Rhythm on the Range")*
If I Were a Bell *(with Patti Andrews)*
I Found a Million Dollar Baby
I Got Plenty O' Nuttin'
I'll Be Seeing You
I'll See You in My Dreams
I'm an Old Cowhand *(from "Rhythm on the Range")*
In the Cool, Cool, Cool of the Evening *(with Jane Wyman, from "Here Comes the Groom")*
Is You Is, or Is You Ain't Ma' Baby *(with the Andrews Sisters)*
It Could Happen to You
It's Been a Long, Long Time
It's Easy to Remember *(from "Mississippi")*
It's the Natural Thing to Do *(from "Double or Nothing")*
I've Got a Pocketful of Dreams *(from "Sing, You Sinners")*
June in January *(from "Here Is My Heart")*
Just One More Chance
Love Is Just Around the Corner *(from "Here Is My Heart")*
• MacNamara's Band
Maybe
Mexicali Rose
Mine *(with Judy Garland)*
Mister Meadowlark *(with Johnny Mercer)*
Moonlight and Shadows
Moonlight Becomes You *(from "Road to Morocco")*
• Now Is the Hour
Old Folks
On Behalf of the Visiting Firemen *(with Johnny Mercer)*
Only Forever *(from "Rhythm on the River")*
On the Sunny Side of the Street
On Treasure Island
Out of Nowhere *(from "Dude Ranch")*
Pennies from Heaven *(from "Pennies from Heaven")*

What's Christmas without Crosby?

Bing's *White Christmas* is the No. 1 best-selling record of all time.

...singing 96 of his biggest hits!

Personality *(from "Road to Utopia")*
• Pistol Packin' Mama *(with the Andrews Sisters)*
• Play a Simple Melody *(with Gary Crosby)*
Please *(from "The Big Broadcast")*
Poinciana
Red Sails in the Sunset
Riders in the Sky
Road to Morocco *(with Bob Hope, from "Road to Morocco")*
• Sam's Song *(with Gary Crosby)*
• San Antonio Rose
San Fernando Valley
September Song
Small Fry *(with Johnny Mercer, from "Sing, You Sinners")*
Somebody Loves Me
Some Enchanted Evening
Soon *(from "Mississippi")*
• South America, Take It Away *(with the Andrews Sisters)*
South Sea Island Magic
Stardust
• Sunday, Monday or Always *(with the Ken Darby Singers, from "Dixie")*
Sweet and Lovely
• Sweet Leilani *(from "Waikiki Wedding")*
Swingin' Down the Lane
• Swinging on a Star *(from "Going My Way")*
That's for Me *(from "Rhythm on the River")*
There's No Business Like Show Business *(with Dick Haymes and the Andrews Sisters)*
They Say It's Wonderful
Too Marvelous for Words
• Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-Ral
Trade Winds
Victory Polka *(with the Andrews Sisters)*
The Waiter and the Porter and the Upstairs Maid *(with Mary Martin and Jack Teagarden, from "Birth of the Blues")*
What's New?
Where the Blue of the Night Meets the Gold of the Day
• Whiffenpoof Song *(with the Fred Waring Glee Club)*
• White Christmas *(from "Holiday Inn")*
Wrap Your Troubles in Dreams
Yes Indeed *(with Connee Boswell)*
You Must Have Been a Beautiful Baby
You're Dangerous *(from "Road to Zanzibar")*

Remembering Bing

A message from Bing's widow

BING CROSBY'S widow has sent a letter of good wishes to the Rustington-based Young People's Light Orchestra and has asked to be kept informed about their activities.

Last year the orchestra's musical director, Peter Nightingale, approached Bing while he was appearing at the London Palladium and the American singer agreed to become a vice-president.

But a few days later he collapsed and died in Spain before his name could be added to an impressive list that includes Dana, Mantovani and Roy Castle.

Later Mr Nightingale wrote to Mrs Crosby in California and she has now replied, wishing the orchestra success in the future.

Recently the young musicians gave a concert for Methold House at Worthing and items on the programme included a tribute to Bing Crosby by the junior choir, who sang Swinging On A Star and Pennies From Heaven.

The biggest Bing Crosby album ever!

It won't let us forget the man and his music —and our personal memories of good times and old friends. Remember ...

- When they were writing the good songs? And good singers like Bing Crosby were singing them.
- Those movie "road" shows? Zanzibar, Morocco, Utopia. Bob Hope and Dorothy Lamour.
- An era of American songwriting that never failed to tug at our hearts?
- Your Hit Parade? When 39 of the 96 songs in BING SINGS were at the top.
- Grand movie musicals like "Holiday Inn" and "Blue Skies"?
- One singer's desire to surround himself, comfortably, with music's giants?
- Crosby records playing 15 minutes a day, every day, on nearly every radio station in the land?
- The songs in BING SINGS? Each song title alone is enough to make us say, "That's a Crosby song."

Can you remember a time WITHOUT Bing's Music?

From early days of clowning it up in 2-reeler Mack Sennett comedies to playing Father O'Malley in "Going My Way" to singing to SRO audiences in New York and London, he beguiled us with his easy-going Joe Doakes manner and consummate charm.

He has been called a legend, an institution, beloved Groaner, undisputed first citizen of the recording industry, one of the greatest entertainers of all time. He was and is of our time, our lives— and we are all the better for it.

Eulogies for Bing...

"If friends could be made to order, I would have asked for one like him."
—Bob Hope

"He was the father of my career, the idol of my youth, and a dear friend of my maturity."
—Frank Sinatra

"He revolutionized popular music, sang the biggest hit of all time, and yet was a man who would be at ease in any American home."
—President Jimmy Carter

TOLL OF THE SEVENTIES

...the inevitable toll of the 70's, it might be said, for with so many young men in their 20's and 30's making their names in the golden era of popular music which was (despite what today's pop papers say) the decades of the 20's and 30's it follows they are all now grouped in their 'Seventies. True, some of them, as is the lot of some of the human race, died prematurely; the remainder have enjoyed the Biblical three-score-years-and ten. For these reasons the toll of those young men has been grievously heavy in this decade.

Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Guy Lombardo, Bing himself...and scores of others of whom the latest, with his death announced in mid-August, is the legendary Joe Venuti, universally voted as one of the greatest of all jazz violinists and a character larger than life. Paradoxically, his great guitar colleague, Eddie Lang, was one of those ill-starred individuals who drew a short straw. His death in 1932 from a supposedly simple tonsilectomy was a tragic loss, especially for Bing who had urged him to have treatment on account of his troublesome throat. Eddie Lang's duets with Joe Venuti are legendary jazz classics, as is the fact that Bing had it written into his recording contract that Eddie Lang was always to be on hand with his guitar.

And now Joe Venuti is dead...he was, like Eddie Lang, one of the great Whiteman alumni - Trumbauer, Bix Beiderbecke (who also died so young), the Dorseys, Teagarden, Malneck, Matlock. And we know Bing had a tremendous affection for Joe Venuti who clearly was a humorist and practical joker of the first magnitude. In CALL ME LUCKY Bing devoted space to some of Joe's more hilarious japes - I always crack up reading the story told by Bing of Joe Venuti suddenly announcing to conductor Whiteman at an important concert and in the middle of a medley that was serious and not comic, that he was going to sing the next chorus! "Joe, don't be silly," whispered Paul, "you know I've got a weak heart...just play your violin!" There is another equally funny.

Joe formed his own band after leaving Whiteman - and one night with Bing he had given a demonstration of how he could crack chair-seats over his head. "But that's nuthin'," added Joe, "I've got a guy in my orchestra called Hammerhead Jones who makes me look like an egg-head." "What does he do?" queried Bing.

> "He's a feature performer I picked up in an amateur contest down South," Joe said. "He's bald. He comes out and he reaches into his pocket and pulls out two ball peen hammers machinists use and plays NOLA on his skull with them."
>
> "How does he get the notes?" asked Bing.
>
> "He opens his mouth wide for the low notes and closes it tighter for the high notes," Joe said. "He plays FLAPPERETTE for an encore. FLAPPERETTE is very good on the skull. But if he takes two encores he gets concussion and has to lay off for a week!" Bing concluded Hammerhead was apocryphal because no-one had ever seen him. Joe explained this by saying "We just use him when we're on the road. 'Fraid someone will steal his act. He travels in an army tank."

Add that sort of humour to his phenomenal fiddle playing and there is truly a fantastic character. Bing explains that he used Joe a lot on his radio shows as it was the only way of staying even with him. Seems Joe was in the habit of ringing Bing from all over the States for cash - on loan!

Another giant gone the way of all flesh....

The Editor

IF I KNEW THEN..... what I know now!

BY DICK NETTLETON - - - - - - -

s a kid I did not get to the Saturday afternoon matinees very often. Pocket-money was scarce in those 'love on the dole' days in Salford and there were rival attractions a tram-ride away at Old Trafford; Eddie Paynter and George Duckworth in the summer - and Manchester United fighting against relegation from the Second division in the winter.

But, one wet Saturday afternoon, I found myself with my pal Harry in the local Astoria. We sat through the adventures of Houdini, Harry Langden and various cartoons. Then a young man in a straw hat (at least, I think he had a straw hat) came on the screen and, after a certain amount of clowning about, settled down to a song out of which the one melodious word LOVABLE buried itself into my memory. Harry, who was at least a year older than I was, and immensely wiser in the ways of the world, leaned over and nudged me in the darkness.

"THAT," he announced, "IS BING CROSBY".

From then on I was hooked on that magic voice. I went looking for it and found it in other Mack Sennett "shorts", in my first full-length Bing film, WE'RE NOT DRESSING and in the endless search around the radio bands at night and on Sundays; Radio Luxembourg, Radio Parisienne, Radio Athlone. Luxembourg, I recall, was the best bet because you were always sure of one Bing: it was his version of YOUNG AND HEALTHY which introduced - appropriately? - the Bile Beans slot every Sunday.

> It was a long time before I heard LOVABLE again. An incredible 40 years and all that time I kept a semblance of that tune in my head.

Back there in the 'Thirties my parents had a gramophone. A splendid cabinet which was my mother's pride and joy, purchased on tick and paid for agonisingly over a seemingly endless number of weeks. Later, when I started work and picked up a little knowledge about electricity I bought a "pick-up" arm and wired it into the radio. This was a great improvement - but the handle still had to be cranked every disc or so.

It was on this contraption that I played my growing collection of 78s. When I think of the abuses we perpetrated on that shellac my blood runs cold. Playing a record in those days was rather like fixing a job into a lathe and applying a cutting tool. Later, someone introduced a wooden needle, but they were a bit pricey and they soon wore out. I developed a fair technique for sharpening them with my dad's cut-throat razor. Fortunately he never caught me at it. These wood needles were much kinder on the records (you could almost hear it sigh with relief) but they were harder on the pocket and they did not last.

Then came the War, marriage, a family and some moving about of home and jobs. For many years I had no "gramophone" and by the time I could afford one they had become "record-players", micro-groove was in and the old needles had become a stylus. When I did, at last, get a record-player there was yet another factor. Teenage sons and their pals were queuing up to play their Cliff and their Elvis (Whatever happened to

Marvin Rainwater?) Thus it was not until the early 'Seventies that I obtained unimpeded access to a turntable. Over all those years there was, of course, plenty of Bing - the films, radio, and then TV, but there is nothing like being able to play your own Bing whenever, and as often, as you wished.

Drifting rather aimlessly, knowing little of micro-groove I picked up the odd Bing LP on the High Street, but largely made do with my diminishing stock of 78s. Time and the removals had taken their toll.

Then I found LOVABLE again, or I thought that I had. The WRAP YOUR TROUBLES IN DREAMS LP turned up in W.H.Smiths. I bought it, took it home and played it. Side One. Splendid, including LOVABLE. Side Two... DISASTER! Play Side One again. Fine. Back to Side Two. The violins sounded like a cat on a fence played on the old machine when you forgot to wind it up. I ought to take the record back. Perhaps I should have gone into one of those little booths and put one of those helmet-type efforts on my noggin and heard the record before buying it. I did not have the nerve to take it back to the shop so I adopted the cowardly policy of half-an-LP being better than no LP.

> Occasionally I would play that duff side because, whilst the violins and Gus Arnheim were hard to take, Bing's voice came through. Not perfect but unmistakeably and recognisably Bing. This unique quality of the Crosby voice I have noticed in other contexts.

When we listened to the European stations in the old days there were often waves of "atmospheric" and the music would vanish from time to time, but Bing's voice seemed to get through. In the factory during the War, Bing's voice came through and over the grindstones and the flapping belts, when the rest of the orchestra became lost. I can remember walking across an airfield and through the whirring propellors came Bing with WHITE CHRISTMAS from a radio in one of the airport buildings. Bing grumbled about people who put on records and then did not listen; but with Bing's voice you could not help but listen. He never became musical wallpaper.

Soon after buying the LP with LOVABLE on one side and the tortured cats on the other I was able to get a new record player and discard the old one that my son's used to monopolise. After years of Cliff and Elvis (and Marvin Dishwater) the auto-change, in self-defence perhaps, had developed a will of its own. It would happily reject a record in full flight and sometimes just the first opening bars were enough for it to decide that it was not going to play that one. At other times it would re-set itself and play the same record ad infinitum, until you turned off the supply and let is rest for a while. It had to go.

> In any case, by now I had the Musical Autobiography and the VERY BEST OF and they deserved something better.

So, happy days, with improved tone and quality - and back again to LOVABLE. The old hands will have guessed what is coming. I had my doubts before, but with the new, clearer, sound I knew that this was not MY LOVABLE. It was good, it was pleasant and it was definitely Bing - but that tune had been in the shadows of my mind for 40 years and this was not it. It was to be another three years before the Mack Sennett soundtrack found its way onto disc and my search was ended. There were two LOVABLES! It was as simple and as beautiful as that.

But there was another splendid surprise. My "duff" side was no longer "duff". It was beautifully played, Gus Arnheim, violins and all. Could I have been so dumb? But yes, I was. In buying a new record player I

had also bought a new stylus! I had thought that these new-fangled gadgets lasted for ever.

At last, at last....I JOINED THE ICC. Bing's Palladium record and Leslie Gaylor's address. I wrote off, sent in my subscription and I was in after over 40 years in the wilderness. A new world of LPographies, A to Z's, mini-discographies, Trading Post, Keeping Track. Crosbyism - or should I use Crosbyana? - raised to the level of an exact science and a fine art. Greetings to Bristo, Bishop, Bassett et al. Its nice to know you.

I should have joined years ago. I have no reasons, only excuses. Perhaps I was like the lady who did not want to know what Bing had for breakfast. I don't know. All I do know is that I have a lot of catching up to do.

But I can't help wondering. If I knew then what I know now....

Editor: The prodigal son - who assuredly is catching up speedily! Its a delight to present such an article as Dick Nettleton has provided - and to our intense chagrin, in the last issue we referred to him (no doubt with Guest Keen on our mind) as Dick NETTLEFOLD! Our sincere apologies. To the man who came in from the cold....

The article is most evocative and if we started memorising on it we would no doubt fill the issue! But there is one aspect Dick touched on worthy of endorsement - the incredible manner in which Bing's did indeed always come through even on an old, scratchy 78. This has occurred to us over and over again and it must be a tribute to the recording methods, now often laughed off by modern technicians, that were used then. Except for that unfortunate inherent surface "hiss" (of the "cutting machine") 78s invariably provide excellent performances by Bing.

And consider, those 78's were actually played originally by means of a steel needle, held against the poor record by a sound-box that, in retrospect, seemed to have weighed a ton! Pure savagery...yet, they survived! True there were some records which were "damaged" after one playing: any record with a very high-frequency sound on it, e.g. a violin, or worse, a vibraphone, immediately developed a terrible vibrating noise. But, we lived with it all! Those 78s being reissued now from the very early days and, in most cases, borrowed from the collection of a notable Crosbyite, almost certainly suffered their first playings by means of a steel needle. Which is something to think about, is it not?

"I'd like to go like Bing Crosby, and may his soul rest in peace. First he played the Palladium, then a round of golf. Yes, that's the way I'd like to bring down the curtain."

LIBERACE ("Woman's Weekly" 22.7.78

BING CROSBY PHOTO CLUB(Frank Murphy: address elsewhere) can supply personalised BING notepaper as follows:

50	printed	sheets	with	50	plain	sheets	and 24 envelopes	£1.10p - post 20p
100	"	"	"	100	"	"	" 48 "	£2.20p - post 35p
50	"	"	"	50	"	"	without envelopes	.90p - post 15p
100	"	"	"	100	"	"	" "	£1.80p - post 25p

LETTERS

Readers' views and news are always welcome - and always popular, it appears, with other members.

Reg Bristo,
7, Greenmeadow Close,
CWMBRAN,
GWENT NP4 3NR.

Letters dealing specifically with discographical matters and/or the various ICC publications on records, should be addressed to Bert Bishop or Colin Pugh - see front for addresses.

EDDIE ALLAN, 16 Kirk St., Edinburgh EH6 5EY: I've just received the latest addition to my collection in the shape of SPOKANE 10, "Der Bingle Vol II" and although I enjoy it tremendously I do have one small criticism and that is in the selection of material. I do wish the compiler (Larry Kiner?) would try as far as possible to choose songs that Bing hadn't recorded commercially. I know that those chosen - and previously commercially recorded - are in many respects just slightly different in arrangement, etc. from the commercially issued record but after all they are still the same songs and I confess that to my untutored ears the commercial recording, for me, is usually the better version. And did we really have to have WHAT DO YOU DO IN THE INFANTRY? on Spokane 10 when it had already appeared on Spokane 5 - DER BINGLE VOL I?

I also purchased a couple of the other Spokanes containing complete Kraft Music Hall shows but I definitely prefer the Der Bingle type of presentation. I feel the humour and sketches in these shows hasn't stood the test of time and frankly some of the guest stars I find abysmal - particularly Victor Borge. In fact, I think the only parts of these shows to stand up now ARE Bing's songs - and his ad libs. I certainly don't think they are a patch on the later Philco shows.

With all this "complaining" I don't want you to think that I'm unappreciative of all that Larry Kiner has done to further the collecting of Crosby material. He is certainly doing sterling work and no doubt my moans are just a voice in the wilderness - but I would be interested in finding out what other Crosbyites think.

> Editor: Agree with Eddie on most counts: Larry has done a great job with his Spokane and Totem albums so perhaps its a little unkind to criticise. The fact is, I suppose, very little comedy bears recording and constant rehearing - and when the "commercials" are included its even more unfortunate. I feel the main impact of such presentations is nostalgia, purely and simply - with the great bonus - as Eddie allowed - we do have Bing's voice standing, as ever, the passage and test of time. I find myself agreeing with Eddie, too, about the commercial issues of songs invariably being the best, or better, versions. The people at Decca knew their business! I wonder, in fact, who did have the final say on which version went out? Jack Kapp probably.

BERNARD J. DENHAM, 795 Greer Rd., Palto Alto, California 94303, USA: I am enormously impressed at the amount of work that you all put in on the magazine and want you to know that it is appreciated. I saw the TV tribute to Bing on the telly last night (25th May in the States) and I truly believe Bing will go down in history as one of the great Americans of this century. After all, he WAS Uncle Sam to so many of us when in England during the War and brought us such comfort and joy during hard times. Please keep up the good work.

> Editor: We don't normally pat ourselves on the back - unseemly! But we especially value such tributes as this from the States, even if it reminds us that Bing was the truest of Americans. We often get to thinking of him as - dare I say it? - one of us on THIS side of the pond! His birthplace didn't really matter, perhaps - he belonged to the world but with a special affection, as he often proclaimed, for the people of Britain. But we enjoyed Bernard's letter - and trust we eventually see the tribute programme over here.

MRS. MARGARET DUTTON, 10 Claygate Rd., Wimblebury, Cannock, Staffs, WS12 5RN

Many thanks for the June BING - as usual, full of interesting items. I do so agree with Bob Davie whom you quote at the beginning - the Circle is of immense value as it binds together all of us who so admire Bing and the magazine is a treasure house of information and opinions. Long may it continue!

Its strange - or is it? - how we can unexpectedly come across some mention or awareness of Bing. Two Saturdays ago we were rushing through Woolworths dur- in the course of a busy shopping morning, wet and harassed and loaded with groceries and there, suddenly, in the music department were ten or so small portable television sets all showing together a very young Bing, singing to a crowd of shoppers of all ages who had stopped to watch. What a happy moment! On returning home the 'Radio Times' told us that this was a compilation of four short films called DOWN MEMORY LANE. Did you see this?

By the way, in BING you mentioned your late parents - which reminded me of my father who loved the classics and opera and sang in the church choir. He enjoyed music like Handel's MESSIAH and loved to listen to Caruso. He had little time for popular music - but he did like Bing. In the months before he died we used to make up tapes for him to play and he always asked for some Bing songs to be included. Now my mother, who is 89, is not musical at all yet she was devoted to Bing and was deeply upset by his sudden passing. She often talks about him and says she still can't believe that he's no longer with us.

Editor: We certainly did see that totally unexpected treat on the Saturday morning (July 8) and it is to be hoped that all our members caught it too. For these were the legendary Mack Sennett "shorts" so revered by Crosby veterans. And now, perhaps, some of the youngsters caught a glimpse of what it is all about, having seen and heard Bing singing those glorious songs. It is impossible for anyone who personally remembers those days to watch that young, carefree Bing, in such glorious voice, without a constriction of the heart - or whatever is the emotion that tightens the throat to almost a physical pain...the story of those short stop-gap films is too well known to need repetition now. Sufficient to say they were made when Bing was more or less at a loose end; he had broken away from Whiteman, was singing at the Cocoanut Grove with Gus Arnheim and Jimmy Grier and, no doubt, was happily convinced he had reached the summit of his career. How little he knew...but he was very, very, happy!

He had no way of knowing that he was on the point of taking off on a career that is quite unparalleled. That soon the whole world was going to ring with his name and his wonderful voice and delightful personality; soon the whole world was to see this happy, genial, so melodious, personality - and go on seeing him for the next half-century plus.

The songs we heard to unexpectedly on that Saturday morning are, of course, now available on the BIOGRAPH album WHERE THE BLUE OF THE NIGHT and having seen the films it is easier to understand some of the "noises off" in some of the songs for it is ONLY on these old Mack Sennett soundtracks that these were captured - happily, for all time. During BLUE OF THE NIGHT, for instance, one understands the car door slamming, and the engine starting up! And the policeman who, when asked by Bing "How'm I doin'?" happily says "Great! That's him all right...!" What a prelude that feature would have been to a Crosby season of films?

We congratulate Margaret on her nice letter - and certainly her mother on her grand age. I am sure that the universal appreciation of Bing by people whose tastes did not normally include popular singers speaks for itself. Truly, there was no-one like Bing....

JIM LEMON, 24 Lyndhurst Gdns, Belfast, BT13 3PH: Please register me as a member of the ICC - I've staggered on too long on my own....I now realise

how wonderful it is that yourself and all the working members of the ICC continue to chronicle, illustrate, itemise, promotoe - whatever you like to call it, the talents of Bing.

I'm 42 now and although a fan from 3 years old (FUNNY OLD HILLS &c) the interest received a further surge with the visual experience of seeing as well as hearing Bing sing AUF WIEDERSEHEN, MY DEAR in a film called DOWN MEMORY LANE in October 1952 and more recently shewn on TV.

I suppose we all would like to be able to express a description of his singing voice and multi-talents but words always seem so futile. No singer has the rhythm of Bing; no singer will ever have the tone and colours that existed in that incredible voice.

No singer will ever have the expression and originality which Bing was able to give to a song, time after time, repeat after repeat. I really feel sorry for people who are unaware of the marvellous human being that Bing was...though having said that I will always regret that I never met the man myself. To me, therefore, he is the voice and the imagine shewn on the screen. But that's enough....

Editor: Had to use Jim's letter after he wrote that "words seem so futile"! In the end, he didn't do so bad, did he?

KEN BROWN, 42 West Avenue, Pinner, Midd'x HA5 5BY: Do you know that the National Film Theatre at Waterloo is putting on a one-day tribute to Bing on 16th September? They will be showing THE BIG BROADCAST OF 1932, THE ROAD TO SINGAPORE, and GOING MY WAY! Regrettfully, I won't be able to attend as I shall be on holiday - in Paris!

Editor: We're delighted to hear of this, meagre as it might be, if only to know that THE BIG BROADCAST still exists!

BERNARD BRUTY, 3a Leatherhead Rd., Ashtead, Surrey KT21 2TW: I have recently bought the Biograph LP WHERE THE BLUE OF THE NIGHT...and was very surprised to see that a fair number of the tracks are on LP for the first time. With lovely numbers such as AUF WIEDERSEHEN, MY DEAR and LOVABLE it is strange why these were not recorded before at the time. Is it to do with copyright?

Editor: No: the answer is simple. We've already mentioned that these short films bearing the lovely songs were made at a time when Bing had no personal recording contract. He was doing a "vocal refrain" here there and everywhere - Sam Lanin, Jimmy Grier, Gus Arnheim and others - but had not yet reached the stage of his own contract. When he did get launched on his meteoric recording career, the songs had already been recorded by others and in any case, had faded from the "hit parade". Thus, happily yet regrettably, we must say again: it is ONLY on the antidéluvian soundtracks of the Sennett films that these songs exist. Happily because they DO exist (and the BIOGRAPH album isn't at all bad on sound) but regrettfully that they never did appear on commercial record. Some of them, of course, Bing did record later - WHEN I TAKE MY SUGAR TO TEA, BETWEEN THE DEVIL AND THE DEEPL BLUE SEA, BLUE OF THE NIGHT, I SURRENDER DEAR and others but alas, AUF WIEDERSEHEN, LOVABLE, and particularly IN MY HIDEAWAY and EVERY TIME MY HEART BEATS (what a beautiful song that is) never did get on to record.

FRED REYNOLDS, 69 Heathmere Avenue, Yardley, Birmingham, B25 8RQ: With regard to the list of films mentioned by one of the members (p. 46 last issue) I do know about most of them but I would like anything you or anyone can tell me about THE SHINING FUTURE, ROAD TO GLORY

and YOU CAN CHANGE THE WORLD. Can you find out just what Bing did in these?

Editor: 'Fraid I can't help; it was news to me too to learn of these Bing-interest films. Most members, except the newer ones, will know that Fred Reynolds is a renowned Crosby researcher being leading compiler of the film book THE ROAD TO HOLLYWOOD and the mammoth discography, THE ROAD TO BING CROSBY. Anyone with knowledge of the films mentioned should get in touch with Fred direct. Assistance will be warmly appreciated.

PETER MONAGHAN, Crosbyana, 25 Weir Avenue, Barrhead, Glasgow: (Peter was featured in the issue before last in a "reproduction" of a newspaper story concerning his Bing-collecting interests and of the time he met Bing): I see my memory of being offered a Frank Sinatra recording of STRANGER IN PARADISE in 1954 is questioned by Miss Beryl Overbury (of the Sinatra Music Society) who says Sinatra never recorded this number. Well, I could swear that the girl in Lewis's record department mentioned Sinatra along with several other singers but as I'm certainly no authority on Sinatra I bow to Beryl's superior knowledge in this respect and accept that he never did record the song. So, either my memory is not what it was or the girl in Lewis's was wrong. The important thing is that I got my first introduction to the great man's work and I still play this particular number yet.

I got the reissue of FROM MIKE TO BING LP and I must say I've found it most enjoyable and would recommend that members give it a listen. Mike Holliday was no Bing but I must say he handles the Bing material on this LP wuite well and I think its worth the £2.50 for the cover alone with the fine photograph of Bing and Mike.

I must just comment that, along with the other members, I still feel shattered at Bing's passing and listening to Bing's records now just isn't what it used to be. No less enjoyable, of course, but always there is that tinge of regret that Bing isn't around any more with the possibility of dropping into the recording studio and treating us to newer stuff - like the BEAUTIFUL MEMORIES album which, by the way, I feel is about Bing's best of his last albums but which was unfortunate to be released just before he passed away and was then overshadowed by the publicity of the SEASONS album which, of course, is marvellous. But I'd be hard put to choose which one I prefer.

LEN HUNTER, 47 Leam Drive, Burntwood, Walsall, W. Midlands: I think without a doubt our Midlands ICC members will be pleased to know that a specialist record stockist has opened in Birmingham, THE RECORD CENTRE, 44 Loveday St., Birmingham 4. It is open on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 10am to 6pm. On my first visit I was most impressed for a good supply of Bing's records are readily available including Totem, Japanese and American releases, many of which I purchased on the spot. The proprietor informed me that he has very good suppliers on the Continent apart from a regular weekly supply from the States.

Prices were extremely good and I found their willingness to obtain whatever records I wanted of Bing, whether they be shows or otherwise, most encouraging. I did discover, however, that one of the proprietors was a keen Sinatra fan. I said I would not hold this against him as Bing does have numerous apprentices all over the world. 021-359-7399 is the number for the RECORD CENTRE.

Editor: I'm sure this will be great news for the Brummie people - and my only other comment about Len's salty remarks is: the views of contributors are not NECESSARILY those of the Editor! But they could be...

JOHN NORRIS WOOD, The Brook, Dewhurst Lane, Wadhurst, Sussex, TN5 6QE:

I greatly enjoy the magazine and would like to thank you all very much for the hard work put into it. I do intend one day to write a short piece of the time - Paris, 1952 - when a friend and myself, both students then, went to see Bing. We accosted him in the street outside the Ritz and experienced the natural kindness and consideration for which Bing is famous. He saw us on and off for the next three days and took us for a taxi ride with him around the centre of Paris - during which, by the way, we all sang a chorus of MISSISSIPPI MUD! This was one of the reasons why I had so keenly hoped to speak to him briefly in London during one of his visits to the Palladium. In any event, I am glad to recall that I was able to take both my small children there and attended six performances in the two years.

I wonder if anyone has a recording of his beautiful opening number last year (I think it was ALL ALONE). I would love to get hold of it. Also I would like a tape of his Pasadena show as my recording machine went berserk throughout the ITV recording. I feel particularly sad to have lost his reconstruction of DINAH with the Mills Brothers for my small daughter aged seven is named after this. She was thrilled when Bing sang it during the Palladium show - "Daddy, how does he know I'm here?" she said.

> I wonder if you heard the tremendous tribute to Bing by Mel Brooks on Desert Island Discs? It delighted me. He described Bing as America's greatest singer. I often have felt saddened by the fact that Bing has had nothing like the recognition that is his due as a matchless creative musician, though he was the last to complain!
>
> Best wishes....

Editor: I venture to suggest that John must be the only ICC member to ride around the centre of Paris singing MISSISSIPPI MUD with Bing! A delightful memory. This must have been during the LITTLE BOY LOST sojourn?

As for the Pasadena show - the one that ended with Bing's fall of course - we must all hope that it will be shown again. No-one is likely to forget its first showing on the Saturday night when we were all vainly trying to absorb the reality of the news we had got 24 hours earlier. The news that in effect told us things would never be the same again.

Some may wonder at John's final remarks for, on the surface, it would seem that Bing got his acclaim in full measure. But as a fine chap, a popular chap, a chap with whose rich melodious voice the whole word was familiar with. Yet the discerning view will be that it is true that Bing has not - yet - been fully credited for as John says his matchless creative work in revolutionising the art of popular singing, his tremendous pioneering work and, especially, the fact that Mel Brooks realises, Bing was a SINGER, one of the finest and not just a "crooner" or warbler of popular songs. Perhaps we'll find the space to say more about this aspect in this issue.

MARK RAKKER, 34 High Street, Wick, Bristol, BS15 5QJ: I have just bought the two Embassy records and just cannot keep them off the turntable! I must admit, though, that I almost DIDN'T buy them when I read the notes by Michael Brooks while in the shop. I certainly won't take any notice of sleeve notes again...

IAN ARNOTT, 22 Sycamore Crescent, Culcabock, Inverness: The two CBS albums were a wonderful surprise as my period for Bing is a little later, but listening to these songs, its easy to understand what an impact they must have had on the public when they were first released.

ALBERT SAMPLES, "Hillsbro", 33 Tawney Str. Boston. Lincs. PE21 6PA:

I enjoyed reading No. 50 and the various comments and views concerning the notes of Michael Brooks on The Bing Crosby Collections. My view is that they were, at least, different from the usual run-of-the-mill write-up(s) we get with Bing LPs. That is tosay, he had some interesting detail though his imagination did run a bit wild! I certainly can't detect any sign of laughter on the COUPLE OF SOLDIERS track. Perhaps he was a bit sloshed when he heard the record!? However, we must all be pleased that these two albums were issued and whichever way we accept the notes, they make a good talking point and help to make an interesting KEEPING TRACK. I only wished we could have had Dert Bishop's comments on the individual tracks.

Any news on Ken Barnes's book? I wrote to Bing at the time of the original airing of the Bing Story on BBC radio and was very happy to get the following reply -

> Dear Mr. Samples,
> Many thanks for your kind letter of July 10. I'm very happy to hear I've been able to provide you with some entertainment and amusement over the years, and also that you have been listening to the 14-week BBC series.
>
> These fellas from the BBC spent several months over here, interviewing everybody who ever had anything to do with me, professionally, socially and athletically. They certainly went into everything very thoroughly, and I think they did a marvellous job of editing.
>
> 7 Aug 1973 Warmest best wishes, BING.

Editor: These last three letters are of special interest - the first two of them because they express a view of these early Bing records (on the CBS Embassy label) from people who did NOT know of them until these records came out. Mark Pakker, indeed, is just a lad and he "cannot keep them off his turntable". While it might have been anticipated it is nevertheless reassuring that that particular magic of Bing - late 20's early 30's - repeats its original impact.

There are also some pertinent comments on the much-talked-about sleeve notes and I must report that the overwhelming consensus of opinion is that of Mark Pakker (above) in varying degrees of disapproval and scurrility! I've already expressed my view of them but might add that IF the issue had been a private one purely for Bishop, Bassett, Bignell Bristo and Bloggs, not to mention Gaylor, Reynolds, Murphy and others, their acceptance could have varied from enthusiastic to luke-warm. But they were an issue for the GENERAL PUBLIC, not the sophisticated connoisseurs (if I may be so immodest!) and in that context can easily dissuade a potential record-purchaser who might otherwise have become a Crosby addict for life.... This view is supported, I feel, by the fact that Brooks can hear the laughter in A COUPLE OF SOLDIERS. He can only do that with knowledge of the "blow-up" - and that issue, though ultimately appearing commercially, is not widely known. To the first-time listeners there is not the slightest hint of laughter.

As regards Albert Samples, I imagine Dert Bishop didn't do a line-by-line review of the Embassies because (as I would have) he thought probably erroneously that everyone was familiar with them!! As stated elsewhere, Ken Barnes is very busy with Crosby projects and while we have no news of his book, we will be the first to know when such news is available.

Obviously, and rightly, everyone is free to take their own view of the contentious sleeve notes we've been reading about and I think we have perhaps demonstrated the point. There would seem to be no further relevance i the pros and cons. With one exception and that is contained in a letter from:

PETER DIFFLEY, 7 Heath Rd., Cale Green, Stockport, Cheshire:

Re. the controversial notes on the CBS albums; to be honest, I wasn't particularly upset by these, feeling (as does Bert Bishop) that they weren't aimed at Bing and they did have a certain sense of humour, though perhaps one of a rather modern 'smartness'. Not, in my opinion, particularly offensive. HOWEVER, I have now seen the inner sleeve-notes on an imported issue and I am shocked and offended by the use of a four-letter word in these. In the context of these inner notes, I can quite see now why you are so disturbed by the outer ones.

The thing is, I don't think the USA inner sleeve notes will be issued in England and readers and collectors will thus be unable to comment o· the friction of this chap's meeting with Bing. Certainly Vol 1 does not print these notes, and the USA issues have them in both Vols 1 and 2, so it would seem that CBS UK have decided not to print. I certainly hope so for I am sure buyers will take the greatest offence at this gratuitous and totally unnecessary foulness. I still cannot understand how CBS allowed the printing of this in the USA.

I cannot understand this chap - Brooks isn't it - haven't got the records by me as I write - as he has undoubtedly taken trouble over the selections on these issues, and he does seem to have a great admiration for Bing - even excusing his 'abrasiveness' in the interview. At the same time, his use of the four letter word in the context of the notes is quite inexcusable and indicates a tawdry and empty 20th-Century 'rock' type mind. The two things just don't go together, and I am puzzled by this contradiction. Possibly I am being naive but I have never seen this sort of language on an LP sleeve before - and I never want to again.

Editor: I hadn't seen the American issue notes when I criticised Brooks's writings so my view wasn't prejudiced - as it certainly now is. Abrasiveness and Bing were a very, very rare occurrence and the only other two examples of this combination occurring indicated that Bing had (a) been grossly offended by an interviewer, or (b) had for some reason taken a dislike to the interviewer, had politely tried to break off the talk and only turned abrupt when such kindly efforts failed. For me, all this speaks for itself. And now perhaps we can all rest in solitude if not contentment with our views! Happily, the USA versions - which may without question be described as outrageous - are NOT going to be used here and we should be grateful to UK CBS executives for that.

LIONEL FAIRPOINT, 36 Ellesmere Ave. Mill Hill, London, NW7 3HD: Delighted to receive my copy of BING and I appreciate the reasons for your unusual tardiness. Over the past few months I too have been engaged in converting our tumbledown shack in Mill Hill into a replica of the Taj Mahal in hardboard and Polyfilla.

(Editor: Isn't that delicious? Readers will recall that I had to explain slight lateness of the June issue as being due to the fact that Mrs. B. (Gwyneth to you!) had casually yet with underlying firmness indicated that "this room is looking shabby..." with the inevitable result that BING production was suspended while I wielded paint brush, roller, already-pasted paper &c. But a replica of the Taj Mahal in "hardboard and Polyfilla".....But back to Lionel who says -

Bear with me while I indulge in that well known side effect of collecting known as "nit-picking". I think Bert Bishop was more than kind to EMI with his comments on the ill-named CROSBY CLASSICS series by Capitol. Particularly

with Volume I, which he describes as 'slightly truncated'. This item includes a sleeve note 'This album has previously been released by Warner Bros. Records under a different title and album jacket'. My copy of WM4021 contains '33 Great Songs 33' where Capitol SM11738 omits to mention '28 some missing 28' and of course, of this 28 they have managed to select five titles of the original which do not feature Bing. How do they manage it? If they have a Trades Description Act in the States I wish someone would invoke it!

Another fine point: this time with the CBS/Embassy 'A Bing Crosby Collection'. In this neck of the woods, this item first appeared in cassette version (still available) with the legend '14 sides never released on LP'. This is now, of course, untrue and might, even at this time, imply to the uninitiate that it was not to be obtained in any other form.

Columbia's BING/HARRY LILLIS CROSBY albums appear to be those re-re-re-re-issues that we crusy old Crosbyphiles have had pouched for years but is redeemed by the slightly rare SOME OF THESE DAYS, S'POSING and the inestimable LAST ROUND-UP which whenever heard, demands at least four replays for the sheer wonder of it. I look forward to the LP that features this number on every track.

Editor: There he goes again! If it will help, Lionel, I will put THE LAST ROUND-UP continuously on a C120 cassette - for the sheer fun of it!

TED TOWLER, 20 St. Johns Rd., Higham, Nr. Rochester, Kent: I was very pleased at the decision to carry on with BING and the ICC after the sad event of last October and I think that the range and excellence of the contents since - and the growing membership - fully justify the decision. I am sure we shall go on writing about Bing, and listening to his records, for many, many years to come for the career, the voice and the memories of that remarkable man can never pall.

It was most fortuitous that Bing was in such splendid voice for his last commercial recording session and I think the resultant SEASONS album provided an eminently distinguished ending to his uniquely supreme, long and fruitful recording career. It was almost as though the Gods had decreed that the master should take his leave of us only at his inimitable best. It is, I feel, the best of all Bing's latter-day albums. His voice seemed to recapture again all the warmth and power and assurance of earlier years. I thought the lovely version of JUNE IN JANUARY, for instance, compared favourably with the earlier ones, and it remains one of my favourite tracks from the album. Another is SUMMER WIND, of course, a song that was 'new' to me but I fully subscribe to Arthur Holmes's view that Bing's marvellous version of it makes it one of the outstanding tracks of the album.

I thought, too, that the accompaniment was much more sympathetic than has often been the case with Bing's albums over the past few years although there were times when it became overpowering and on occasions the exuberance of that quite insensitive drummer nearly ruined things for me. Why do modern drummers seem to regard every album as a showcase for them? It used to be an axiom that the best drummers are those that imply rather than stress the beat; but modern musicians don't seem to understand dynamics and things like that!

But notwithstanding my estimation of the SEASONS album, and allowing for the fact that it was Bing's farewell, it must take second place to those marvellous CBS reissues of Bing's Brunswick recordings. This is indeed vintage Crosby, singing songs from the vintage years of popular music. For me, nothing that Bing recorded after about 1945 can surpass the style-setting recordings of the early 'Thirties and the string of subsequent successes made later in that decade with Victor Young and John Scott Trotter. One of Bing's recordings that has eluded me over the years is

his version of Ray Noble's lovely song, I FOUND YOU. For some months past I have been debating whether to spend the nearly -£5 on the Decca 2-record memorial set solely to acquire that particular track - I have all the others on this double-album which, as you will know, is a compilation of one of the Ace of Hearts EARLY 30'S albums and some more recent recordings. And now, lo! and behold, I am able to get I FOUND YOU and thirteen other marvellous tracks on Volume 1 of the CBS albums - for just £2.25p! And as I have none of the other thirteen tracks either it is indeed an incredible bargain. As one of your correspondents remarks, the ways of recording companies are strange as I too would have paid a lot more for this album. But - we mustn't tell them!

I was intrigued to notice that on LAZY DAY Bing sings entirely different lyrics from those heard on most of the British dance band recordings of this number. I have records of it by Ray Noble, Jack Payne and Hal Swain which all have identical lyrics - but completely different, as I say, from those sung by Bing. Seems the song was published on this side of the Atlantic with a different set of lyrics from those used in the States though there appears nothing to which one could possibly take offence on either of them. Its strange.

And now Volume 2 is available too, with yet more lovely things to enthral and delight us. Not quite as attractive an acquisition, perhaps, for me personally as I have, like many of us, 78s of about half the tracks but the use of many alternative takes makes for added interest of course - and naturally, another lovely album at an excellent price.

I must take issue with the correspondent who criticised the accompaniments of Guy Lombardo. 'Ricky-tick Canadians' indeed! I feel they accompanied and blended with Bing superbly, particularly on YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL TONIGHT MY DEAR, a lovely number that I had not heard before. And I don't think I've heard Bing in quite such sombre mood as on I'VE GOT TO PASS YOUR HOUSE - another number I can't recall having heard before despite my devotion to the early 30's. Certainly I hope CBS will not get around to putting out the rest of the early Brunswicks. Besides the items Les Gaylor mentioned I should also like to see I'M PLAYING WITH FIRE and TWO CIGARETTES IN THE DARK available on microgroove - but I hope they will dispense with the quite cynical, almost disparaging sleeve notes that accompanied Volumes 1 and 2. They were in incredibly poor taste - and even more so in the States, I understand.

There still seems plenty of interest and quite a potential demand I imagine in the reissue of the BING'S HOLLYWOOD albums and I don't think its reissue should prove quite so daunting a proposition for EMI/MCA as you seem to suggest. For whereas the series was originally issued on the 15 LP's of 12 tracks or so each, EMI now put 20 tracks on many of their albums and if this practice were followed the 180 tracks could be condensed into nine albums. I'm sure such an issue would enjoy good sales. Les Street's enumeration of his memories of favourite Crosby films/songs reminds me how desirable it would be to have this fine collection available again.

Editor: A well-considered letter: the differing lyrics of the British/US versions of LAZY DAY must have a story behind it - but we don't know what it is. The Jack Payne (British) version gives the composers as Martin and Posford, while the American credits on Bing's effort give Khan, Khan, Martin and Posford. Perhaps SOMEONE knows. And if I was a scolding Editor I would have to apply the treatment to Ted for I'M PLAYING WITH FIRE - and a host of earlier recordings - is on DISTINCTIVELY BING Vol 2. SUNBEAM though these records are not too readily available but see TRADING POST.

I don't want to appear a Jonah but one of the reasons why I'm not too confident of a reissue of BING'S HOLLYWOOD is that so many of these films songs have appeared on other fairly recent issues, e.g. THE VERY BEST OF BING, and the 20-title BEST OF BING CROSBY, both my EMI/MCA. Still, the companies are not averse to issuing duplicates (as we all well know to our cost!) and certainly Ted Towler's thought that they could be issued in 20-title per LP form would make it more economic to the hard-headed record company executives. Perhaps the day is coming when the tracks on an LP will be virtually unlimited such is the rate of technological development in this electronic age, tho' I must confess, against this possibility, is the more concrete one that records as discs are on their way out in favour of cassettes! Not overnight, naturally, but you will observe that the cassette shelves of shops are steadily getting larger all the time. And a colleague was telling me the other day of new electronic organs becoming available which have a fantastic range of registers (tones) and yet are getting smaller in the "works". Incredible circuits, what they call "memory banks" I understand, can be fitted into incredibly tiny cases....we might even reach the time when a really complete Crosby collection - aye, from 1926 to 1977 - might be contained in a gadget the size of a matchbox! Well, perhaps a little larger - big enough say to have buttons to select the year and the title required. After all, that's all you have to do on an electronic organ, or roughly so! One can get any rhythmic accompaniment desired on the one hand (or foot) and any range of tone - brass, woodwind, strings reeds, etc. on the other. Its a staggering thought -- and how we would miss those lovely (sometimes!) sleeves, and the pristine black shininess of the record...which illustrates that whatever technological developments occur the average Crosbyite is unlikely to bring himself or herself to disposing of their record collections. Not even for the new space that would become available - a couple of whole rooms in some cases! Ah well, we can dream, can't we?

Well we digressed a little on a wild flight of fancy...but before leaving our thoughts on the letter from Ted Towler we might comment on his "defence" of Guy Lombardo. Guy's band, of course, was noted for its prominent saxophone section, "smaltzhy" some called it so perhaps Bing did complement it well for quite a number of people have in the past described Bing's voice as a "saxophone" voice. Stanley Holloway, in particular, wrote a book in which he thus described Bing's vocal efforts - in a most laudatory and complimentary way. Takes a stretch of the imagination for yours truly to get the allusion, however.

GEORGE BENTLEY, 5706 Bluebell Dr. North Little Rock, Ark., 72118, USA: I'm looking forward to a long and friendly association with the ICC. A get-acquainted note: I'm the courthouse reporter for the Arkansas Gassette - have been a reporter for 30 years -- and a Crosby fan for far longer. I enjoyed, among other pieces in No. 50 THE LYRIC BING by Dick Nettlefold citing songs of the 30's and 40's in which the lyrics mentioned Bing. I remember when I was in the Pacific in 1945 I heard a Sinatra song (perhaps on a V-disc) using specialised words for SUNDAY, MONDAY, OR ALWAYS which ended NOW THEY'RE COMING FAST, SOON THEY WILL BE PAST - COMO, HAYMES AND (A THIRD I CAN'T REMEMBER) - THERE'S JUST ONE CROSBY, THERE'S ROOM FOR ALL OF US... Perhaps someone can fill in the missing words. Louis Armstrong on one of his last albums, LOUIS ARMSTRONG AND HIS FRIENDS on Amsterdam label AM-12009 sang a song written for him called BOY FROM NEW ORLEANS - a sort of brief musical resume - in which Louis sang OUT IN HOLLYWOOD I TOOK MY PLACE/WITH MY FRIEND BING AND PRINCESS GRACE. It was recorded May 29, 1970 and the writers were BOB THIELD, who produced the album, and two listed only as ROBERTS AND KATZ.

Mr. Nettlefold also mentioned MR. CROSBY AND MR. MERCER but to that can be added MR. CROSBY AND MR. HARRIS (PHIL) which was sung three times with different lyrics and no musical accompaniment in the outdoors on AMERICAN SPORTSMAN by Bing and Phil. Was this shown on British TV? Perhaps someone could compile a cassette of all these songs. I will contribute the Armstrong for starters! I have the Bing-Phil but poor quality, and can get the Mills Brothers OPUS 1.

EDWARD PACOCHA, 500 S. Vine Str., Shamokin, Penna, 17872, USA:

There is something I would like to pose to the British Bing advocates: Do any copies exist of the phonetic German broadcasts beamed by Bing via the BBC to Germany during World War II? I must have read of this incident, or incidents, in a half-a-dozen different soutces of Crosbyana - but cannot seem to find out if any copies exist.

Editor: If anyone DOES know of these, leave alone have copies, yours truly would be most interested for this is the first I've heard of such broadcasts. From what Edward has said these seem to relate to purely propaganda broadcasts to Germany and I didn't think Bing had participated in these. That Bing's voice - Der Bingle - of course remained popular in Germany via records and picked-up broadcasts is well-known but it seems to me direct propaganda is an entirely different matter. Let us know if YOU know please.....

On occasion members may be slightly surprised to see a letter they had written and almost forgotten appear here...this is because we really do get a lot of mail. Not an issue isn't completed that I don't view with horror the pile of letters marked MUST USE! - and haven't! Nevertheless, they are all read with interest and not destroyed until all point has gone. Soon after October 14 we had a tremendous pile of anguished mail, quite a lot of which were used - many omitted with regret. Some contained some remarkable phrases. For example:

"Time's winged chariot has at last caught up with Bing alas and for most of us a huge gap has been torn in our lives.... its difficult to believe he has really gone and I'm sure we all feel we have lost a personal friend. However, it is certain no man left so much when he left the world behind and we can go on enjoying his films and records for the rest of our lives...."

This is an extract of a letter by FRANK WILGAUS of Cleethorpes which, on re-reading, we feel you would like to see - late or not.

MRS. IRENE ORR, 1 Church Rd., Gummards, Nr. Cowes, Isle of Wight: I went to Brighton a few weeks ago to see the plaque in memory of Bing's last concert and was pleased to see it in the entrance hall in such a place where it could catch the light for everyone to see....it was well worth the trip. Surely the Palladium will do the same?

TONY SWAIN, 7 Caradoc Cres., Monkmoor, Shrewsbury, Salop: When the blue of the night meets the gold of the day on October 14 let's remember Bing for the wonderful person he was and for the wonderful legacies he has le t us, on disc, film and video-tape.....I can truthfully say I've never missed anyone - by death - so much as I've missed Bing. Its amazing, isn't it, how much an idol can come to mean to us without ever actually knowing or even meeting him. I have followed Bing's career for 18 years and am now 26, and the first Bing record I owned was a 6-inch orange-coloured record on the GOLDENTONE label - ALI BABA AND THE FORTY THIVES which I had when I was nine in 1961...

And a letter to restore some mirth:

NEIL ROBINSON, 39 Southdown Ave. Brixham, S. Devon: My own war story, for what it is worth, was of 1942 when I was helping to organise a Naafi concert and was asked to sing something into the microphone to test same. I gave my immaculate version of Bing singing ONLY FOREVER only to be told by the technician: "Why don't you sing it like Bing Crosby?" He was deadly serious but my ego suffered a tremendous blow. At 19 I too thought I could emulate the master like many others. How wrong can we be?

Editor: Gee, that was tough, Neil!

I'VE BEEN READING

BY - JOHN BIGNELL - amongst whose reading recently has been a brilliant book about Bing written more than 30 years ago, and some entertaining and criginal sleeve notes.....

"The best book ever written about Bing Crosby was by a Dr. Mize". Thus Reg Bristo to me in a letter written shortly after the - to me - disappointing Chas. Thompson 'biography' appeared on the bookstalls a couple of years ago. Members of the ICC who have not had the opportunity to read Dr. Mize's book BING CROSBY AND THE BING CROSBY STYLE can rest assured that the perception and judgement of our esteemed Editor is well-founded and can now be endorsed by me.

Dr. Mize was born in 1910 and was 36 years old when he wrote what can only be described as a definitive treatise of the greatest singer the world has ever known - or is ever likely to know. In fact, one could enthuse about Dr. Mize and the Mize literary style at some length before one began to detail some of the actual content of this splendid work. It is like no other book about Bing. Dealing adequately and objectively with Bing's career and home life, there is not a single page which does not touch upon some aspect of the most important facet of the subject under review, i.e. Bing's remarkable and unique voice. In fact, a large section of the book is devoted exclusively to a detailed and brilliant analysis of thirty recordings as diverse as THE LAST ROUND-UP, I'LL BE HOME FOR CHRISTMAS, SHINE, THE WALTZ YOU SAVED FOR ME, ROUTE 66..etc. etc. The good Doctor even analysed that most neglected - and in my opinion, the best - version of BLUE OF THE NIGHT, the 1940 recording with The Paradise Island Trio.

DRAMATIC ILLUSTRATIONS:
When Dr. Mize makes a point about the supreme artistry and unique talent of Bing he comes up with examples which illustrate his point dramatically. To emphasise Bing's well-known ability to learn a song and get it recorded with the minimum of fuss and effort he relates that when Mr. Crosby walked into the recording studio on 25th July, 1944, to wax DON'T FENCE ME IN with the splendid Andrews Sisters he had never even seen the music to Cole Porter's cowboy ditty - nor even heard the tune.

> "Though he doesn't even really read music, and the arrangement is highly complicated with echoing parts bandied about right and left, the master record was cut and on its way to the processing and pressing rooms within thirty minutes."

An even more devastating comparison emerges on another recording: "When the great Paul Robeson recorded the lengthy BALLAD FOR AMERICANS he took three and a half days to complete the venture...Bing did it in four hours!"

And when Dr. Mize lists Bing's female singing partners he is devastatingly accurate in his assessment. Consider this: "Bing has used several girls as singing partners on his (various radio) programmes, varying from negative Lina Romay to mediocre Mary Martin to splendid Trudy Erwin to superb Connee Boswell."

THE TRUE ESSENCE:
We have all heard many humorous stories about Bing, some of them ad infinitum, but Dr. Mize, typically, comes up with one most of us had

not heard before and, personally, its got to be the best I've ever heard. It appears Bing, Phil Silvers and Rags Ragland were on a train trip on a privately promoted and financed camp show tour during the War years and the early-rising Bing stuck his head through the green Pullman curtains and called his companions to breakfast, improvising a light operatic strain to his ad lib lyric...."PHILSY...RAGGEDY. UP YOU SLUGA-A-BEDS...THE DAWN'S ATOP THE TELEGRAPH WIRES AND THE BACON TO THE EGG ASPIRES.' This tale, I feel, captures the full essence of Bing Crosby and brilliantly illustrates his intelligent sense of humour.

The book concludes with a discography which even then - in 1946 - was more lengthy than that of most other singeres still recording today. The thought occurs to me that Dr. Mize, assuming he is still with us, would yet be only into late middle age - after all, 68 is no age these days - and what a fine job he would make of updating his magnificent book with a definitive analysis of the complete Bing Crosby career. Problem: how do we get in touch with the perceptive doctor? Any ideas?

..HERE WAS A CROSBY ADDICT UNAFRAID.

When I read the sleeve notes to the CDS album A BING CROSBY COLLECTION Vol. I the first thought that struck me was that here was a Crosby addict - Michael Brooks - who was not afraid to reveal his own individual viewpoint. I was unprepared for the spate of criticism I have since heard from various sources. When Volume II of the same collection was released I read the sleeve notes with much interest to see if I could fathom what the critics were unhappy about. Again, I found the notes informative, witty and highly personal in style. I have since learnt that the sleeve notes on the American double album release do indeed contain some material which I would probably find in dubious taste. But - how many of our members have actually seen these more controversial notes? I can only comment on those notes on the back of the English releases and try as I might I cannot see any cause for complaint. Mr. Brookes has some opinions about some of the songs which I would not share. LITTLE DUTCH MILL and WHAT DO I CARE, ITS HOME would be among my own favourite early recordings but then, what does this prove? After all, I seem to be almost alone in disliking TEMPTATION so it could be that if I wrote sleeve notes to a collection of early recordings I too would receive some angry letters by return of post.

The maligned Mr. Brooks is at pains to point out that Bing brings to each and every one of these songs his own unique style and interpretation. He is absolutely on my wavelength and I would hope, on yours, with regard to his assessment of the Crosby performances. He even solves a mystery I've lived with for over thirty years. When I bought the 78 recording of RIDING AROUND IN THE RAIN in 1046 I had the same difficulty as Mr. Brooks with the last line: OH..HOW THEY WEAKEN IN THE RAIN came out as OH! HOW THEY REEK IT IN THE RAIN for him. For me it sounded like OH! HOW THEY LEEK IT IN THE RAIN. And I have fondly and mistakenly imagined all these years that Bing was doing a favourite Crosby trick of changing the pronunciation of a word - I thought the word was 'like' purposely sung as 'leek' as a tongue-in-cheek piece of devilment.

So, Mr. Brooks has improved my Crosby education to boot as well as providing much entertaining reading. If there is a third volume of this excellent set of recordings I do hope Michael Brooks does the sleeve notes. And if they include the rejected take of WE'RE A COUPLE OF SOLDIERS our bemused Editor will be able to hear the infectious laugh in all its glory.

Editor: I am only bemused at some of the sometimes self-contradictory articles submitted! Older members may recall that I went on record with the view that the issuing of these "fluffs and blow-ups" did no service to Bing and might, in fact, be considered infra-dig - like peeping thro' a bathroom keyhole forsooth. John refers to a rejected take of WE'RE A COUPLE OF SOLDIERS. Actually, it was a complete blow-up and never considered for issue except that someone smuggled the recording - illegally - out of the studio.

Mail at the time, and since, showed that a lot of feminine admirers, and not a few men, were very upset at the commercial issue of these recording errors in particular, WRAP YOUR TROUBLES IN DREAMS. The opinion I formed was that while no-one considered Bing a saint it was a poor show indeed to bandy about these unfortunate mishaps, especially when they contained bad language. I formed that opinion from mail received but I had the same opinion long before. And to substantiate that I never did buy the recording.

Dr. Mize? Perhaps some of our Stateside members can tell us if he is still around. But even if he is I think it unlikely he would want to further his book which was an analysis of the unique style of Bing not so much a story of his (Bing's) career. And having made the analysis he considered the project complete. That isn't to say another book on Bing wouldn't be absorbing from Dr. Mize's pen!

There are other views on the sleeve notes referred to in LETTERS in this issue.

OUR INDUSTRIOUS - AND DEDICATED - MEMBERS + + + + + +

Our members have been very busy in many directions: Trevor Wagstaffe of Dagenham, for instance, has endeavoured to enlist the aid of Illtyd Harrington, Deputy Leader of the Opposition of the Greater London Council in getting some memorial at the Palladium - it will be recalled that this gentleman was a great friend of Bing and indeed, was reported to have escorted Kathryn to the Palladium at last year's sad Command Performance. So far, without response.

Many, many more members have written to ITB (Thames Television mainly) asking about the chances of a repeat of the Pasadena TV show screened on Oct 15 last, and conflicting with a Parkinson round-up on BBC. All the regions reported no plans to re-show this programme. Just as many have asked both BBC and ITV why no Bing film festival, or commemoration? Again, it is astonishing to have to report that negative replies are unanimous. The above-named Trevor Wagstaffe indeed had a letter in THE DAILY MIRROR pointing out this lack of filmic tribute to Bing...

And a large number were taken by the idea of a rose named after Bing and wrote to the well-known rose cultivators. You've guessed it - none have any plans for such a rose....its a depressing story. BUT, in case you thought naming a rose might be a fairly uncomplicated matter to a horticulturalist you will be interested in a letter JIM HALMS of Finsbury Park received from HARKNESS NEW ROSES LTD. -

> Dear Mr. Halms: Thank you for your letter about the possibility of naming a rose for Bing Crosby. The reference book we all rely on does not give either a BING or a BING CROSBY, so I suspect that perhaps the idea was mooted at an earlier period but nothing came of it.
>
> We'd be very happy if the International Crosby Circle would like to sponsor a rose to be named for such a good man who has given all of us so much pleasure. We do have a number of good seedling roses from which such a choice could be made and if the Circle wish to take the matter up, we could forward details and photographs.
>
> THERE WOULD BE A CHARGE FOR THE NAMING RIGHTS, AS WE TRY TO RECOVER THE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT COSTS OF OUR NEW ROSES (EXCEPT FOR THOSE WE NAME FOR FAMILY AND PERSONAL FRIENDS). THE AMOUNT VARIES ACCORDING TO THE TYPE OF ROSE - HYBRID TEAS ARE VALUED MORE THAN

FLORIBUNDAS, for example, because they are less easy to produce. The naming fee ranges FROM 500 up to £10,000. Once a decision has been made introduction into commerce can be effected within 1 to 4 years, according to circumstances, and the quantities likely to be required.

Yours sincerely PETER HARKNESS...

Editor: Whew! That's an"introduction into commerce"with a vengeance, is it not? I have absolutely no idea of this business but, as Jim Halms observed in his letter "I had no idea of the costs involved and was somewhat taken aback by the £500 to £10,000 naming fee...." And I am, too Jim! One understands costs and research/development have to be recouped but....but as I say, I just do not understand what is involved. Having purchased the name within that financial bracket, does the rose belong to the "purchaser"? And after all expenses have been recovered, does any further revenue go to the purchaser of the name? Its all a mystery to me.....except, that anyone can BUY a tribute and is not what I think our good-hearted members had in mind. But thanks to JIM HALMS for enlightening us thus far....as a matter of fact, John Bassett reminds me that it was a TULIP that was named for Bing Crosby some years ago.

It is apparent that more and more of our members, too, are "do-it-yourself" enthusiasts by which we mean, of course, they are on the look-out for Bing's films as they become available being equipped with sound-projectors. And more is becoming available. KEN HILL, 67 Gooseberry Hill (what do they do up THERE?) Luton, Beds writes:

I came across the enclosed in the Sept. issue of MOVIE-MAKER and thought it might be of interest to members -

'I SURRENDER, DEAR:
- 9 minutes Super 8 BW/Sound £5.75. Distributed by Collector Films, Bartholomew Square, off Ironmonger Row, London, E.C.1.

It was a great loss to the popular music world when Bing Crosby died last year. I wish someone would release here in England one or two of the famous ROAD movies in which he co-starred with Bob Hope - not forgetting Dorothy Lamour in her drip-dry sarong!

Collector Films have delved much further back to the very outset of Bing's career when, in the early 'Thirties, he made countless two-reelers for Mack Sennett. He invariably played himself, sang a couple of songs and joked along the way. The plot was always rather trite and for this reason Collector Films have edited out most of it, leaving us with the songs which, I would think, is all Crosby fans require. He sings I SURRENDER DEAR, OUT OF NOWHERE and AT YOUR COMMAND.'

Fair enough - though alas, the Mack Sennett's were not 'countless'. We wish they were.

DEREK COLLINGE, 41 Marsden Hall Rd., Nelson, Lancs has been in touch with United Artists regarding an album entitled THE GOLDEN AGE OF AMERICAN RADIO which is believed to feature Bing prominently. UA told him: "It was previously scheduled for release quite some time ago but was put on 'hold'. However, it is now scheduled for release in October with the same catalogue number, UAG 30115 and will be obtainable from any record dealer that holds an account with EMI."

And among new members - to all of whom we extend our usual warm welcome - we're delighted to have KAREN WESLEY (and her dad!) whom members will recall was responsible for some delightful Bing pieces in ladies' journals and other publications, particularly around last October....In one of these it was stated that Karen had the intention (she is a journalist, albeit apprentice? or am I up the wrong tree?) of writing Bing's life story. Excellent! Many people have

ANSWERS TO THE CROSBY QUIZ ON PAGE 21/22:

1. LAZY: QUIZAS, QUIZAS, QUIZAS; SHOE SHINE BOY: GO FLY A KITE.
2. There are at least two: WOULD YOU (i) Van Heusen-Burke; (ii) Brown, Freed; and I NEVER KNEW (i) Fiorita, Kahn, and (ii) Pitts, Egan, Marsh.
3. Mona Lisa.
4. Tobermory Bay is in Scotland.
5. LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR: ITS THE TALK OF THE TOWN: DREAMER IN ME: SILVER ON Its the THE SAGE.
6. Beatrice Lillie who was Lady Peel.
7. Edward Loring "Red" Nichols - a film with Danny Kaye as Red was recently re-shewn on television here.
8. AREN'T YOU GLAD YOU'RE YOU? from BELLS OF ST. MARY'S; ZING A LITTLE ZONG from JUST FOR YOU: SMALL FRY from SING YOU SINNERS.
9. We make it ten: A Crosby Christmas; Fatherly Advice; What a little moonlight can do; Down by the Riverside; Moonlight Bay; When You and I were young Maggie blues; Play A simple melody; Sam's Song; Cornbelt symphony and Call of the South.
10. [illegible]ces Langford
11. Marcheta.
12. The Breeze and I.
13. THE GREAT COUNTRY HITS.
14. MUDDY WATER - and
15. Y'ALL COME.

Hope you enjoyed it and got them all correct! And now all we have to do is to wait and see how many ANSWERS we got wrong - but we're optimistic this time!

THE MIDLANDS

TOM EVANS reports that the local circle is progressing and we are hoping to acquire a more suitable meeting place. It must be admitted, however, that Midlands members have not so far shewn the interest we expected and this is slightly disappointing. However, we are optimistic that they will yet come into our local fold. It has been suggested that a request for a list of Midlands members be asked from you in order that we may invite existing ICC members to our meetings but I will leave that to your judgement.

We had a film night on July 11 last when Bing's film MR. MUSIC was shewn starring with Bing Nancy Olsen. The venue was the Bowmaker (Plant) Ltd., Lift Truck Division in Cannock, Staffs. And it proved a most pleasant and successful evening.

Editor: It is slightly disappointing that the host of Midlands members have not rallied around Tom to date; as a matter of policy we do not give members' names and addresses without their permission for quite often there are objections. We do urge Midlands people, however, to rally round Tom Evans for the Midlands could indeed form one of the largest of all regional groups. Tom's address is: 84 Brereton Rd., New Invention, Willenhall, Staffs, WV12 5LR (Telephone Bloxwich 76978)

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kindly suggested that yours truly should be able to write such a story....and, immodestly, I feel I could. Except that I regard it as a life's work in itself - and as I'm already 103 there isn't much time! Still, its nice to be considered - and warmest best wishes to Karen.

WHILE, in

SWOP SHOP

This is the popular feature of BING wherein members may advertise their wants and disposals for records, tapes, cassettes, photographs, books in fact any item of Crosbyana which may be their particular bent. There is no charge because we feel this facility to be a very necessary one and collecting is one of the most important features of a Crosby interest. But because it is desirable to keep the whole thing in manageable proportions members are asked to put their advertisements on a SEPARATE sheet of paper - this will go a long way to virtually guaranteeing its appearance - and also to avoid lengthy lists of records. To overcome this members should invite enquiries if they have a large number of records to dispose of. Exceptions have, however, to be made to the general rule of "no charge" as it is noticeable that dealers have - and they are in no way blamed for it! - been taking advantage of our "buy and sell" columns. In future they must be considered in a different category to the private member seeking items of Crosby interest. We appreciate them for they do a valuable job in importing records and other items and they should communicate with the Editor with a view to reasonable terms:

JOHN BASSETT, "Bingville", 15 Oast Way, Rochford, Essex:SS4 1RZ FOR EXCHANGE: Standard 8mm sound cartoon TOYLAND BROADCAST, circa 1931, featuring Bing caricature and voice. New condition. Will exchange for any of the following 10" albums: LA8645 LE BING - SONG HITS OF PARIS; DL5298 BING CROSBY SINGS THE SONG HITS.

MALCOLM McNEIL, 56 Boyd Str., Crosshill, Glasgow, G42 8AN: The Coral LP's I LOVE YOU TRULY and DAY DREAMING, plus SONGS I WISH I HAD SUNG are desperately wanted. I have the following items for exchange: Vols 1 and 2 A BING CROSBY COLLECTION; Books THE ONE AND ONLY BING, Chas. Thompson's updated BING, a paper-backed BING; a booklet called THE LEGENDARY BING CROSBY, my own personal small tribute to Bing with newspaper headlines, pictures in colour &c; unusually, a nice negative which produces an excellent picture of Bing at the microphone entitled TRIBUTE TO THE OLD GROANER. All are new.

Editor: A most intriguing advertisement from Malcolm and I trust he won't mind me revealing that he is 70 years of age - and he has been a Bing man since the start. He also assured me, quite unnecessarily, that anyone helping him would get a fair deal! Oh, I've already offered Malcolm the material on tape or cassette but he is not equipped....but a later letter tells us he has a new copy of the CLUB DURANT album (where Bing and Schnozzle parody BLUE OF THE NIGHT - the only Bing item) which can be put among his items for exchange as well as a number of Jolson albums.

BARRY HOLLOWDAY, 6 Heo Green, Wick, Littlehampton, Sussex, BN17 6DD would like to contact any ICC members in his locality.

ROY BISSELL, 128 Vicarage Rd., Wednesbury, W. Midlands, WS10 9DP offers rare Bing LPs for Dean Martin's THIS TIME I'M SWINING and SONS OF KATIE ELDER (soundtrack) and other Dean Martin EPs, LPs. SAE appreciated. (Preparing an ad. like that sends shivers down my spine! - Editor).

ALAN CHADWICK, 3 Mortimer Close, Phoenix Green, Hartley Wintney, Nr. Basing-

stoke, Hants, RG27 8EL has an 8mm sound copy of THE ROAD TO MOROCCO which he would be interested in exchanging for another full-length feature film of Bing; he stresses it is not for sale - exchange only.

MR. GORDON THOMAS, 50 Barnstock, Bretton, Peterborough, PE3 8EH: is considering get-togethers - at his home if need be to start with - of fellow-fans and would be pleased to hear from people reasonably close to him and would want to attend such functions. Gordon, you may recall, offered members a BOOK CITY catalogue which carried a nice Santa-Claus garbed Bing on receipt of a SAE measuring 6" x 9". He can still supply. (TEL: 0733-267833)

DEREK C. PARKES, 66 Firs Rd., Winterslow, Salisbury, SP5 1SW: WANTED! LP's SHHH! BING CROSBY VOLS 1 and 2 - GOING HOLLYWOOD VOL 7 - AFRICAN SAFARI. I will buy or trade similar material.

DICK NETTLETON, Brackendale, Ferndale St., Faringdon, Oxon requires back nos. of BING - 9, 10, 35 to 44 incl (but exclusing 39) and No. 46. Condition not important provided readable. Will pay reasonable price plus postage.

MICHAEL KENEFICK, No. 4. Friar-street, Youghal, Co. Cork, Eire advertised in the last issue for contacts with admirers of the late Mike Holliday - he has had some response and asks us to add that ALL letters will be answered. He must be please - with many others - that the Mike album, FROM MIKE TO BING, has just been reissued.

BARRY WHITTINGHAM, Caravan, First Avenue, Greasley Street, Bulwell, Nottingham: I have the following records:

Columbia DB 2056, Bruns. 01993; 02664; 03019; 03384; 03528; 03604; 03635; 03753; 03930; 05277; 05674 - these are in vg. condition. Rex 8957 - chipped rim NOT affecting play; Bruns. 02412; o2713; 02787; 02805; 02849; 02900; 03019; 03528; 03539; 03589; 03708; 03932; 04071; 05224; 05339; 05410; Capitol CL 14645 all with slight surface wear. Capitol CL.14645, Bruns 02786; 03184; 03313; 03456; 03494; o3534; 03565; o3569; 03779; 03783;04098; 04553; all with surface wear and scratch but not affecting audibility. Bruns. 02492; 03565; 03875; o3882 average condition, scratch/hiss can be heard quite clearly. Finally CAPITOL CL14761 on a 45 in mint condition and a new copy of SPOKANE 3 bought in error and the shop too far away to exchange! All tenders/exchanges sent to address given please.

Tasteful ties, dark blue with the Bing "silhouette" motif in gold can be obtained from:

It is a tie that can be worn with virtually any colour suit.

RON BAXTER,
THE BADGE CENTRE
45 ROPERGATE,
PONTEFRACT,
W. YORKS, WF8 1JY
(Tel: 702951)

Price is £1.60 post paid.

Two taped programs - BING RECALLS THE RHYTHM BOYS (with dialogue and music); RECOLLECTIONS OF RUSS COLUMBO, with dialogue and airchecks by Bing, F. Sinatra, B. Goodman, Russ Columbo and others. Can supply on cassettes - BOB KUMM, PO Box 298, Staten Island, New York 10314, USA.

FRANK HATWELL, 240 Gillott Rd., Birmingham 16 would like the phone number of the BRISTOL member who 'phoned him in June re LP's.

) PLEASE READ "THIS TI E I'M SWINGING" 4 lines from bottom of previous page)

Maria Zettner, Nordstr. 54, 4052 Korschenbroich 2, West Germany: I would like to have an English penfriend belonging to the Crosby Circle. I am 17 years of age and my interests are, of course, BING CROSBY and reading... Sincerely....

Maria sounds a charming young girl and here is a good opportunity for a "European exchange".

JOHN BIGNELL, 21 St. Andrews Aven. Wembley, Midd'x: (Tel 01-904-2539) has the following for sale or exchange: BING'S HOLLYWOOD Nos. 2.3.4.6.7.9.11. and 14 (all in good condition). Bruns. 05674 (Around the world): 05277 Young at Heart/Oh Baby Mine) 03019 Beautiful Dreamer/You are my Heart's Delight; 03384 White Christ/Let's start New Year Right: 02746 Deep Purple/Summer Time; Capitol CL14645 True Love/Well did you evah?: Utd. Artists single How Are Things in Glocca Mora/Heat Wave (Ireland issue only); Japanese MCA 3162 Bing Sings Songs by Geo. Gershwin. WANTS ARE AH 139 Bing sings for Children: Bruns. LAT8154 HIGH TOR: Decca DL 8269:Blue Hawaii - DL8374 Some fine old Chestnuts - DL8687 Around the world with Bing; Disneyland ST3998 Goldilocks - Festival DL 30-360 Happy Anniversary Songs - DL31-575 Bing goes Hawaiian - Gala GLP 351 Ali Baba & 40 Thieves - London HA T 2143 Paris Holiday - Phillips BBL 7335 Say One for me - Project LP-1003 Sing along with Bing - RCA 27196/7 How the west was won - Reprise R6106 Return to Paradise Islands - Warner WM 4021 Join Bing and singalong - WM 4034 101 Gang Songs Pt 1 and Wm4046 101 Gang Songs Pt II.

MIKE SLIPMAN (RARE RECORDINGS) 153 Francklyn Gardens, Edgware, Midd'x is specialising in the import of the rarer Crosby (and other) recordings, e.g. COLUMBIA SPECIAL PRODUCTS BING/HARRY LILLIS CROSBY P14369 special price £3.25: " " " CROSBY CLASSICS (great cover) reissue of Hallmark £2.75; CAPITOL SM11738 CROSBY CLASSICS VOL 1 (reissue of Warner Bros LP Take me out to ball game, Daisy Bell, Long, long Ago, Shoo Fly don't bother me, etc. etc. £4.50: Vol 2 another Warner reissue Shine on Harvest Moon, Flow Gently, Sweet Afton, Sweet Rosie O'Grady, When Saints go Marching in etc. etc. £4.50 Vol 3 My Wild Irish Rose; In the Gloaming, Little Annie Rooney, etc. etc. BIOGRAPH BLPC 13 BING CROSBY RARE EARLY RECORDINGS 1929-33 My kinda love, Lets do it, I'm in Seventh Heaven, Face the Music medley, Blue Prelude, Street of Dreams etc. etc. £4.90: THE MURRAY HILL BOXED SET of 4 LPS £12.00 incl. postage. Many others: Post extra - 1 LP 40p, 2 or double set 55p. Other artists Sinatra, Haymes, Jolson, Garland, soundtracks &c. SAE for lists please.

THE MINI-DISCOGRAPHY HAS, AS EXPECTED, BEEN SNAPPED UP IN EAGER FASHION. HOWEVER, POSSIBLY BECAUSE OF HOLIDAYS AND OTHER DIVERSIONS, THE FULL MEMBERSHIP HAS BY NO MEANS OBTAINED ITS ISSUE: IT IS AVAILABLE, AT £1.50p post paid from the Editor.

THE 162-PAGE LP-OGRAPHY IS ALSO AVAILABLE AT £2.50 POST PAID FROM THE SAME SOURCE BUT STOCKS ARE NOW SMALL AND SOON THIS WILL BE A MUCH SOUGHT AFTER PUBLICATION - SO, THE MESSAGE IS OBVIOUS IF YOU HAVEN'T GOT YOUR COPY. AND NEEDLESS TO SAY, THE SPATE OF NEW ALBUMS AND REISSUES MEANS THAT THIS PUBLICATION HAS TO BE UPDATED IN THE NOT TOO DISTANT FUTURE.

Overseas members must note that the above price including P & P is for UK members. Obviously the expense of sending these abroad is much higher. So to make things absolutely clear: overseas members must pay £3.00 for the LP-ography at which price it will be sent ANYWHERE by air-mail; the mini-discography will be similarly posted for £2.00. Regret this distinction but otherwise the project will cost us money, and we only want to break even.

Reference the earlier note re. BING ties we learn that the Badge Centre also has some of the ties in MAROON, with the Bing motif in gold - so state your preference.

NOEL J. MOULD, 16 Sussex Court, ANTRIM, N. IRELAND offers C60 tapes of Bing's original soundtrack songs from 1931 to 1955 as well as some 500 songs from Kraft Music Hall shows at £2.00 each plus postage.

NON-COMMERCIAL taping requirements may be met by the following (SAE when enquiring please):

ARTHUR BLOOD, 597 Osmaston Rd., Derby, DE2 8NE
GEORGE HARWOOD, 5 Glebe Rd. Hemingford Grey, Huntingdon, Cams. PE18 9DS
STAN AUSTIN, 58 Pear Tree Avenue, Yiewsley, West Drayton, Midd'x UB7 8DQ
ARNOLD BAKER, Cherrytree House, 48 Groomsport Rd. Bangor, Co. Down, N.I.
E. DERMOT, 5 Peak Walk, Balloon, W. Wollatton, Notts.

PETER DIFFLEY, 7 Heath Rd., Cale Green, STOCKPORT, Ches. may still be able to help you with THE FILMS OF BING CROSBY, clothbound 11 x 8½", 400 fine photographs, £10 plus postage (around 60p); and THE ONE AND ONLY BING, also clothbound 11 x 8½", 250 pictures, £5.50p plus postage. These are totally non-profit prices and precisely what the books cost - and Peter will consider exchanges against Australian GOING HOLLYWOOD albums.

KEVIN ANDERSON, 455 N. Reeder Ave., Covina, California 91724, USA has for trade several Bing books and records....

The SUNBEAM albums, DISTINCTIVELY BING VOLS 1 and II are available from RICHARD SELWOOD, 2 New Buildings, Molverton, Somerset, among other imported Bing albums.

MR. F. J. THOMPSON, Lower Holbatch, Sutton-St. Nicholas, Hereford wants tapes of THE BING CROSBY STORY (BBC radio) and records OR tapes of KATRINA, THE HEADLESS HORSEMAN, ICHABOD.....

MRS. SYLVIA LAWRENCE, 27 Harvey Goodwin Avenue, Cambridge, CB4 3EX has the following LPs for sale at the prices shewn plus postage (between 30 and 40p for a single album, 50-6 for "doubles"): BING & AL Totem 1003 new £3.00 SINGING SWEETHEARTS OF THE AIR Startone new £3.00; BING AND LOUIS LIVE Family £2.50p; RHYTHM IS OUR BUSINESS Jimmie Lunceford Orch AH £3.00; RODGERS&& HART 1927-42 Showbiz LP £3.00 new; Jessica Dragenette Totem £3.00 new; BING SINGS GERSHWIN Japanese LP £5 new; BING CROSBY THE GREAT ENTERTAINER Japanese 3-LP set £13, new; THOSE WONDERFUL GALS OF STAGE, SCREEN AND RADIO 2-LP set £5.00; HOLLYWOOD ON THE AIR PRESENTS JUDY GARLAND Startone LP £3.00; BING CROSBY ON THE AIR Totem LP £3.00 new. SAE when enquiring please.

I have acquired a medallion and a pendant - two separate items although the latter is, in fact, exactly the same as the medallion on its own. The medallion is sterling silver Crown size and is mounted and comes in a really fine leatherette padded cases - and costs £15.00. The pendant consists of the medallion with a stronger and nicer mounting, strung on a beautiful sterling silver rope chain and is packed in a fine case similar to that for the medallion alone. Cost of this is £25.00 and are available from POBJOY MINT LTD., Mint House, Oldfields Rd., Sutton, Surrey. On one side is engraved the words GENEROSITY...MODESTY...GREATNESS, around an engraved impression of a combination of a Christmas Tree, golf clubs, a pipe and the familiar Bing 'hat'. On the reverse is Bing's photo image with HARRY LILLIS CROSBY 1904-1977 inscribed. These are beautiful momentoes....writes ARTHUR HOLMES....

A PLACE IN GWENT....which used to be, until the counties re-naming, Monmouthsire...

CWMBRAN is pronounced COOM (as in Lancashire dialet "come"), and BRAN, as in lucky dip! CWMBRAN...Cwm being 'valley' and 'bran' being crow it yields Crow Valley, or Valley of the Crow. It is a new town with a difference, this being that there has always been a Cwmbran, now known as "Old Cwmbran". Newport lies five miles to the south; Pontypool five miles to the North. Three miles away is the famous Roman fortress town of Isca, now Caerleon and the scene of an amphitheatre and constant (even today) archaeological diggings. Cardiff is 20 miles to the South West....

Cwmbran was in the coal, iron and steel belt but the face is changing with newer, lighter industry. Just two miles towards Pontypool is the un-Welsh village of Sebastopol! So-named because during the Crimean war (and others) it made choice cannon-balls for the works of Richard Thomas & Baldwin were situated there - and still are. All around Pontypool can be seen pit-headings, with the winding-gear and coal conveyor belts...and still a fair number of colliers. Pontypool is also notable for its rugby football team and its invariable contribution to the British Lions (tho' I'm a soccer man and have never seen rugby except on TV). The M4 motorway from London to South Wales and West Wales is just 3½ miles from our door. You might have gathered this is your Editor answering in one go many enquiries I am constantly receiving!

Moving north-west we come to Usk, thence on to Raglan, Monmouth and the wonderful scenery of the Wye Valley, with Symonds Yat, Ross and other delightful places. Northwards we get to Abergavenney and Brecon - and the Brecon Beacons....countryside and scenery to rival any in the world Cwmbran itself has been enlarged beyond the original concept and is now creeping up the sides of a modest mountain range - Mynydd Maen, presenting a rugged but beautiful skyline which changes colour dramatically with the seasons - just now it is a delightful purple, being virtually covered in heather. Owing to the car-age (and the demands of Crosbyana!) we don't do nearly the walking we should in this lovely area.

I am not Welsh! Except by inclination and domicile - brought about by the vicissitudes of the War. I've been here, in different places and on and off, for close on 40 years but was born in South-east London in a place called Plumstead - where the rest of my family (brothers and sisters) still live and whom I still visit from time to time. My wife IS Welsh, being Gwyneth....don't write and tell me it is GWYNNETH because it isn't! My gaps away from South Wales since 1940 have involved stays at Chatham, Woolwich, Cardiff, Gibraltar, and Birmingham....but I don't think I will be moving much more as I shall be retiring in 2-3 years time. The moves were occasioned by my employment with the Ministry of Defence, but originally with the Admiralty.

We don't hear so much about it now but when this was Monmouthshire there was always argument as to whether it was in Wales or England....whenever the local correspondence columns of the paper were short of letters the Editor (I am certain!) wrote a letter suggesting Monmouthshire was in ENGLAND! There would ensure, for several weeks, half-and-half support for it being in Wales and England! The Welsh language is NOT spoken here, but the delightful every-vowel-sounding English in a beautiful sing-song IS. Sadly, I've retained my Cockney twang - though I wouldn't want London readers to be put out by that remark: its just that I do admire the pure English that is spoken in the Principality.

There, I think I've covered most points raised: this was no ego-trip on the part of your Editor but merely taking the opportunity to answer so many queries that are - not unnaturally - raised in the mail I get. Finally, I love a trip to London now and then - but will never return to live there again.

MANY READERS HAVE ASKED FOR THE HISTORICAL DATA CONCERNING THE LOVELY MURRAY HILL SET. SEEMS TO ME THIS WILL TAKE A DEAL OF RESEARCH - if BERT BISHOP IS TOO BUSY CAN ANYONE ELSE HELP OUT?

BARRY WHITTINGHAM, Caravan, First Avenue, Greasley Str., Bulwell, Nottingham: The local radio here has a Sunday morning programme called THE DENNIS McARTHY SHOW. Dennis has his daughter with him most week-ends - her name is Tara - and one Saturday Dennis and Tara saw the Sherriff of Nottingham at a 'do' and were asked if they could play Bing's SUNSHINE CAKE on the radio. Well, they didn't have a copy and said that the Sherriff (Max Rollings) would have to do without. Now, being a Bing addict, I thought that if someone wanted to hear one of his records they certainly should. So I took my copy to the studio and asked if I could help out by loaning it. Dennis was delighted at this offer and - after taking details - broadcast the song and sang praise to me by mentioning me and commenting on my large number of Crosby records, adding: "Barry must be in the Guinness Book of Records - or if not, the Double Diamond at least!" He's a bit of a wit.

DICK PEARSON, 45 Park View Rd., London, N17: A new shop specialising in quality nostalgia has recently opened in London and they have a good stock of some quite difficult albums that I often note members are after. A recent browse-around revealed BING IN PARIS, NEW TRICKS, CROSBY CLASSICS, THE YOUNG BING CROSBY, EL SENOR, WHILST TREGAMAN SWINGS, several Corals, BING IN HOLLYWOOD double-album (with a sticker 59/5d!) They have many others including the elusive BING'S HOLLYWOOD - some of them, at least. I'm sure members in town will appreciate this - the address is THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT II, 11 Drury Lane, London, W.C.2

I understand there are many more projected JAPANESE issues - but these are so expensive.

Editor: I remember reading about this new nostalgia shop, and I'm glad Dick has filled us in - but a cautionary note: it should not be assumed they will do mail-order. They may do - but enquire. Otherwise the information is, of course, only a boon to those in reaching distance and those (like myself) who make the periodic visit to London. Note the address - its just off the Strand - and add it to the HMV Shop in Oxford Str., and Chappells in Bond Street as well worth a visit.

VIC BYNE, 28 Upton Rd., Slough, Berks: I enclose a picture I took a couple of years ago. I took a colour-slide of Bing's spot at Hollywood's famous Chinese Theatre. The light was bad, unfortunately, but it is reasonably clear. I also had no difficulty in finding Bing's "Stars" in the Hollywood Boulevard 'SIDEWALK OF THE STARS'. Most entertainers have one brass star let into the pavement. The maestro has three - one for recording, one for radio and one for films - and no doubt there is one there for TV but that's the one I couldn't find!

Many readers were moved at my "this room's looking shabby" excuse last time... TONY HOLMES, 9 Ashbourne Ave. Whetstone, London, N20 0AL: I find tapes most useful when decorating as it is easier to carry the recorder from room to room...and listen to Bing while carrying out these tedious tasks. It helps a lot! In fact, my wife Doreen is quite happy with the situation and I have decorated the dining room, hall and landing, one of the bedrooms and promised Jayne hers will be done by the end of this month....

Editor: Whew, that's enough Tony! I do that too - but it doesn't get the magazine very far!

And now, for this issue, it is GOING, going.... see you "Christmas"!

REG BRISTO, 7 GREENMEADOW CLOSE, CWMBRAN, GWENT, NP4 3NR.